

Candidate Brief



KENNETH
GORDON
MAPLEWOOD
SCHOOL

Director of Advancement

June 2023



Kenneth Gordon Maplewood School (KGMS) is a highly unique, independent K - 12 learning community dedicated to preparing neurodiverse students for learning and for life.

Guided by the principles of Universal Design for Learning, we are known for meeting each student where they are, offering adaptable programs tailored for each individual's strengths and learning needs. KGMS's students, teachers, and staff work together to build on student's strengths, while giving them the tools and confidence they need to adapt to their learning challenges, which can range from autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, and other learning differences.



Our 85+ educators believe that every individual is to be celebrated, and that education must consider the whole child. Balancing experiential and applied learning, the arts, and a ubiquitous focus on social-emotional learning, our students build confidence, explore tools for resilience, develop a growth mindset, and become their own self-advocates.

Located in a quiet and picturesque residential North Vancouver neighborhood, KGMS families travel from across the lower mainland to access KGMS.

We take great pride in our impact and are often told that the KGMS experience is 'life-changing'. Now, building on 50 years of exceptional educational programming, and in response to growing demand, KGMS is now well-positioned to invest in a rigorous and professional advancement program. Our inaugural Director of Advancement will launch our advancement program and be our in-house subject matter expert.

This is an exciting and rare opportunity for an experienced fundraiser to:

- Make their mark as the school's first ever Director of Advancement;
- Critically analyze current advancement programming;
- Build a strategy for the school's fundraising and alumni relations growth, in line with the KGMS strategic plan;
- Leverage an excited staff and teacher group, an enthusiastic and committed Board, and other resources to fully execute the plan;
- Build a shared vision for what the future of advancement may look like, including, but not limited to capital campaign options.

This is a role for an ambitious and driven advancement professional who is seeking leadership and autonomy in a collaborative, dynamic, and deeply meaningful environment.

ABOUT KGMS

When Anne Rushforth's son was in Grade 5, she overheard his teacher introducing him to another parent as "one of her slow students." Rushforth bristled, knowing that "he just needed a school to teach him in the way that he learned." She said, "I decided that there needs to be a school for these children, where they're understood." So, in 1973, she built it, naming it after her son, Kenneth Gordon. And parents have been thankful to her ever since.

Today, KGMS is a coeducational day school for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 and a member of the Independent Schools Association of British Columbia.

KGMS is a specialized school for children with individual learning needs that accompany a diagnosis of dyslexia, ADHD, anxiety, autism, and other learning differences. KGMS excels at adapting BC curriculum, instruction, and assessment to fit students' strengths and learning needs.



With over 200 learners across Junior (K-6), Middle (7-9), and Senior (10-12) programs, students benefit from significant personalized attention, daily one-on-one tutoring, and one of the lowest student-to-teacher ratios in BC. Students are engaged in a variety of ways and presented with multiple pathways to success.

Parents and learners come to KGMS often having made many attempts to find the right environment for their child; too often KGMS has been in the school of "last resort", where public or other independent schools have not worked out for our students. Now, however, the school is building its credibility as a school of **choice**, recognizing the excellence of the programming and the desire for parents and community to have their children excel.

Our Vision: Inspiring Futures. Changing Lives. Together.

Our Mission: Empower diverse thinkers. Build confidence and capability. Realize dreams.

Our Values: Inclusive Education. Belonging & Connection. Leadership. Diversity. Perseverance.

Our Value Proposition: Kenneth Gordon Maplewood School is a centre of excellence in developmentally informed instruction that empowers children with learning disabilities in a passionate, progressive, and inspiring learning environment.

Together, we are committed to foster a compassionate and deeply connected student-focused community, and a rewarding, nurturing professional environment for our dedicated staff and educators.

For more information about KGMS, see <https://kgms.ca>

Strategic Plan: 2022 - 2025

The leadership, Board, staff, and community have established key strategic priorities for the school in the coming years. The Strategic Plan, 2022 – 2025 captures KGMS's ambitions in the following areas:

- Financial Sustainability
 - For the purposes of the Director, success areas include Advancement growth, as well as: Stable & Predictable tuition income; Moderate operating surplus directed to reserves; Stable & Sustainable Student Aid.
- Programme & Services
- Student Demographics
- Human Resources
- Facilities

The entire Strategic Plan is available by request.

ADVANCEMENT AT KGMS

Current Advancement activities are varied and historically based on resource availability, volunteer interest, and tradition. The School's flagship fundraising event is the "Best of Me" gala in support of bursary funds. The gala takes place every two years, and this March's gala raised \$270,000 (including \$50,000 from a former parent family). In alternating years, the KGMS golf tournament raises about \$30,000.

Other occasional activities include a Purdy's fundraiser (for the PAC); funds from the BMO Vancouver Marathon as charity of choice, and some small foundation grants. Other large parent contributions in recent years have included \$100,000 for renovations and \$45,000 for technology upgrades.

A planned giving program is currently being established.

KGMS has no formal alumni relations program, in part because some students may only attend KGMS for a few years. The school has 400 contactable alumni.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Candidates have varying backgrounds and traits, and our hope is that the new Director will possess some combination of the following attributes:

- A growth mindset; ambition and focus on continuous improvement.
- A strong understanding of the unique nature of independent schools.
- Thrives in, and motivated by, in a busy, student-centered environment.
- A strong strategic outlook; the ability to both share and receive ideas.
- The ability to connect strongly with others and engage people in the mission of the school; contagious enthusiasm.
- Drive, dedication, and a goal-orientation; looks to achieve at a high level.
- Exceptional communication abilities; comfort and adaptability for a wide range of audiences.
- A high degree of professionalism and integrity.
- Proactive and anticipates well; comfort with ambiguity and defaults to action.

Desired skills and experience:

- Generalist fundraising experience, ideally with deep knowledge and ability in areas such as major gifts, annual giving, and planned giving.
- A strong background in a broad-based advancement program, ideally from another independent school.
- Experience cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding donors.
- Experience growing fundraising programs; campaign experience would be a great asset.
- A deep understanding of the interactions between fundraising, alumni relations, communications, marketing, and admissions.
- Experience and understanding of the needs of neurodiverse individuals and their families would be a strong asset.
- A willingness to learn and grow, ideally demonstrated by an affiliation with AFP, CAIS, CFRE, or other similar professional association.
- A Bachelor's degree in business, communications, public relations or other related discipline, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Duties:

As a member of the school's senior leadership team, the Director will work directly with the Head of School, Senior Leadership, and staff and volunteers in marketing, communications, and admissions to enhance the scope of fundraising and advancement at KGMS. Specifically, the Director will:

- Plan, develop, execute, manage and evaluate all aspects of a comprehensive fund development program which may include, but is not limited to: major gifts, direct mail/annual giving, capital campaign, sponsorship, grant writing, planned giving, and special events.
- Establish, coordinate, and execute strategic fundraising plans including measurable goals, and schedule of activities, and associated budgets with an emphasis on increased and sustained revenue.
- Foster the growth of best practices in gift processing, data management and donor communications.
- Oversight of KGMS's Communications and Marketing portfolio, including the school's web site, social media feeds, and other external communications.
- Lead one direct report, the Director of Marketing and Communications, delegating tasks as appropriate and providing mentoring and coaching; develop a professional development plan.
- Develop an alumni relations program that complements the school's advancement portfolio and deepens alumni connections to KGMS.
- Establish and maintain good working relationships throughout the organization and with outside constituencies; develop partnerships with external stakeholders.
- Create and deliver persuasive and compelling presentations of the KGMS case, goals, and objectives to secure gifts.
- Stay abreast of changes or trends in fund development to inform and successfully advise senior management on strategic priorities.
- Evaluate the viability of capital investment needs, and a possible capital campaign.
- Identify, cultivate and solicit corporate and foundation prospects in accordance with the fundraising plan.
- Support events, particularly stewardship and cultivation events.
- Adopt KGMS's collaborative leadership approach that promotes an organizational culture that places value on the contributions and insights of all members of the team.
- Demonstrate a strong code of ethics and maintain confidentiality.

FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO APPLY

To apply or learn more, please contact KGMS's search partner, Christoph Clodius at The Discovery Group, at christoph@thediscoverygroup.ca.

Deadline: All submissions should be received by July 14, 2023.

The selection process will take place in July with an ideal start date prior to the school year beginning.

Compensation, Perquisites and Flexible Hours:

As a new role, we envision the Director's compensation range being \$90,000 - 110,000.

KGMS offers a comprehensive total compensation package including extended health and dental coverage, RRSP program, a generous vacation package, tuition discount, and much more.

The Director will have a dedicated and newly renovated office, and being on campus to see staff and teachers and meet with parents is essential; however, the Director will have some autonomy over their schedule and would ideally be on campus at least two or three days a week.

KGMS is located in North Vancouver, across the street from Maplewood Farm and five minutes from the Ironworkers Memorial (2ND Narrows) Bridge.

Equity: At KGMS we are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workforce by ensuring a barrier-free work environment. We welcome applications from all qualified job seekers, from BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color), persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ (persons of all sexual orientations and genders). If you are an applicant with a disability, we will work with you to make reasonable workplace accommodations you may need for your best work performance.

Profile: Head of School - Suzanne MacLeod



Suzanne MacLeod is an accomplished educator and passionate leader. With a career spanning across public schools and independent institutions, Suzanne has consistently focused on recognizing and nurturing the unique talents of all students.

Prior to joining KGMS, Suzanne was with the Urban Academy, a middle and senior school where she spent over a decade as the Principal and then Vice-Principal. She also worked with the Vancouver School Board, and the Learning Disabilities Association of Vancouver. Suzanne's Head tenure is her second time at KGMS, having worked as a teacher here previously in her career.

She firmly believes that every child has the potential to achieve greatness with the right education and support. As a dedicated educator, Suzanne is known for her unwavering commitment to her students' success. She finds her greatest joy in fostering connections with students and families, witnessing their growth from their primary years all the way to graduation.

Suzanne's educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Educational Psychology and Curriculum Development from Simon Fraser University and a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Yorkville University. Suzanne applies this knowledge in her private counselling practise as well as her work in special education, educational psychology, and curriculum development. Her expertise in these areas has helped shape her holistic approach to providing a supportive and inclusive educational environment.