

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY | PALO ALTO, CA



# ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR CURRICULUM, COMMUNITY, AND CULTURE





*Since its inception, Keys has been a pioneer in social-emotional learning, and our commitment to developing emotional intelligence skills is what separates Keys from other schools. Students won't find these strategies in a once-a-week class. At Keys they'll find these strategies, in addition to a vibrant curriculum, deliberately embedded in each subject they encounter, laying the foundation for students to soar academically.*

— HEATHER ROGERS, HEAD OF SCHOOL

# LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Keys School, a K–8 independent school in the heart of Silicon Valley, is seeking an empathetic, strategic, and dynamic leader to serve as its inaugural Associate Head of School for Curriculum, Community, and Culture (AHCCC).

Known for its warm and inclusive community, Keys School places a premium on academic excellence, social-emotional learning (SEL), and deep relationships. With a mission to challenge students to develop a keen intellect and a generous spirit, to advocate for themselves and others, and to honor curiosity and reflection in an increasingly hurried world, Keys has cultivated a distinctive environment where students are deeply known, valued, and empowered to thrive. This exciting new role reflects Keys' continued commitment to integrating equity, belonging, and innovation into the core of its already strong curriculum, emotional intelligence practice, and grounded, authentic culture.

Reporting to the Head of School, Heather Rogers, the Associate Head will play a pivotal

role in shaping the educational and cultural journey of students from kindergarten through 8th grade. This leader will work collaboratively across the school to align academic programs, foster and infuse a culture of inclusion and belonging, build faculty capacity, and champion initiatives that reflect Keys School's relational ethos. With expertise in curriculum development and a commitment to integrating DEIJ practices and social-emotional learning, the AHCCC will lead efforts to ensure a seamless and transformative K–8 experience for students and families. By fostering connection and cohesion across divisions, the AHCCC will uphold the school's mission and help guide its community in addressing both challenges and opportunities with grace and creativity.





Central to the success of this role will be the AHCCC’s partnership with the Heads of Lower and Middle Schools, two highly respected and experienced leaders. Together, this trio will form the cornerstone of the school’s academic leadership team, working in close collaboration to align and elevate curriculum, culture, and community. Their dynamic partnership will ensure that students and families experience a unified and intentional approach to the K–8 journey. Building upon Keys’ established strengths in curriculum and instruction, the AHCCC will work closely with faculty and staff to recognize and amplify their expertise and creativity. By leveraging their complementary expertise, this team will set a powerful example of collaborative leadership, modeling the importance of connection, trust, and shared vision.

This inaugural role represents an opportunity to partner with a talented and dedicated team in advancing a school culture deeply rooted in joy, inclusion, and a love for learning. The AHCCC will join a community where kindness and advocacy are central to the student experience, where learning is relational, not transactional, and where the continuity of the Keys model fosters a close-knit and impactful environment for students and families alike. This leader will build upon Keys’ strong foundation while helping to chart new paths forward in curriculum development and community engagement.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

By working in close partnership with the Head of School, Leadership Team, and other key stakeholders, the Associate Head will prioritize the following:

- Partner with the Division Heads and the Curriculum and Instruction team to further align and strengthen the K–8 curriculum scope and sequence, including seamlessly integrating SEL and DEIJ principles throughout.
- Define and advance the school’s DEIJ “North Star” by establishing a clear and sustainable vision for the work and then helping to build capacity for faculty and staff to help enact the vision.



# THE POSITION

- Champion the school's emotional intelligence practice and build upon its SEL program.
- Support and enhance faculty and staff development through professional development programs that empower them to grow in their practice and deepen their commitment to Keys School's whole-child philosophy.
- Act as a spokesperson for the school as it relates to clearly articulating Keys' educational program to families, helping them understand the school's approach to academics, the whole-child philosophy, SEL, and DEI, among others.
- Support systematic thinking and operational clarity by helping to create efficient decision-making structures that balance collaboration with action.



## ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

### *General Leadership*

- Stand in and represent the Head of School, when necessary, to ensure that all school operations are running smoothly.

### *Curriculum Leadership*

- Lead the Curriculum and Instruction team to ensure Keys School's academic program is research-based, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate.
- Partner with Division Heads, Assistant Division Heads, and faculty to implement cross-divisional consistency and coherence in curriculum design, ensuring smooth transitions between grades and divisions.
- Design and implement professional development programs that empower faculty and staff to grow in their practice and deepen their commitment to Keys School's whole-child philosophy.
- Advance the "Our Mind" Commitment of the [Strategic Plan](#).



### *Community and Culture Leadership*

- Lead, in partnership with the Head of School, Senior Leadership Team, and Board of Trustees, the ongoing analysis, evolution, and development of school systems, policies, and practices that foster a culture of inclusion, equity, and belonging for all community members.
- Work with faculty, staff, and families to build a cohesive and unified Keys School community, highlighting the unique strengths of a K–8 educational model.
- Lead the DEIJ Committee (current Committee members: Head of School, Division Heads, Assistant Division Heads, two DEIJ Faculty Team Leads, and select faculty and staff).
- Partner with the Director of Advancement as a key liaison to the Parent Association, supporting parent education, communication, and initiatives that align with the school’s mission and values.
- Support cultivating authentic relationships with mission-aligned organizations in the Bay Area to expand learning opportunities and deepen connections.
- Mentor faculty and staff to build capacity in SEL integration, culturally responsive teaching, and inclusive instructional practices.
- Support recruiting and retaining highly skilled, mission-aligned faculty and staff who embody a growth mindset and a dedication to student-centered learning.
- Serve as a strategic partner to the Head of School, providing thought leadership on initiatives related to curriculum, community, and culture.
- Advance the “Our Heart” Commitment of the [Strategic Plan](#).



# THE POSITION

## QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES

The successful Associate Head candidate will be a strategic and empathetic leader with deep expertise in curriculum development and a demonstrated commitment to integrating SEL and DEIJ practices. They will possess exceptional emotional intelligence and relationship-building skills, enabling them to foster trust and collaboration across Keys' K–8 community. This leader must be both a visionary and hands-on educator who can honor existing practices while thoughtfully advancing curriculum and community initiatives. With significant teaching, curriculum, and leadership experience, they will understand child development across the K–8 spectrum and appreciate the unique opportunities of Keys' educational model. The AHCCC will be an active listener and skilled facilitator of courageous conversations, supporting faculty growth while maintaining a student-centered approach. Their ability to lead from within, build capacity in others, and balance multiple strategic priorities will make them an effective partner to the Head of School, Leadership Team, faculty/staff, and families alike.

Additionally, the AHCCC will:

- Demonstrate experience building and sustaining inclusive communities while understanding the nuances of DEIJ work in K–12 schools.
- Embed SEL practices, with deep understanding of developmental stages K–8, across content areas and through community events.
- Bring a collaborative spirit and the ability to think generatively while respecting Keys' strong foundation.
- Model a growth mindset while maintaining high standards for self and others.
- Navigate complex situations with grace, demonstrating sound judgment and the ability to support both individuals and the broader community.
- Balance strategic thinking with practical implementation, knowing when to delegate and when to engage directly in the work.

## MISSION

*Keys School challenges students to develop a keen intellect and a generous spirit, to advocate for themselves and others, and to honor curiosity and reflection in an increasingly hurried world.*

Keys Students:

- Know themselves and treasure relationships
- Pursue intellectual challenges
- Reason, communicate, and persuade with conviction
- Play, perform, and create with enthusiasm
- Utilize technology to advance innovation, design, and collaboration
- Explore the natural world and its complex systems
- Seek and embrace the diverse perspectives and experiences of our global community
- Thrive in high school and life

## INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

### Growing an Inclusive Community

*We know that a diversity of thoughts, experiences and backgrounds is necessary for our students to learn deeply and engage meaningfully in the world. We work to build a supportive, respectful, caring community of adults and children that reflects and affirms all aspects of identity. At Keys, every voice matters.*

*We embed conversations about identity in curriculum and policy. We cultivate an environment where we seek and embrace the diverse perspectives and experiences of our global community; where each seeks to know and be known.*

*We commit to engage fully in the daily, courageous, complex, messy work of hearing and valuing each other. We aspire to foster thinkers and leaders who invest in their ongoing personal development, who practice inclusivity, who challenge assumptions, and who strive to create a more just world.*

*Know and be known. Listen and be heard. Dive in...*



## QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- A passion for Keys School's mission and Inclusivity and Diversity Statement, with a commitment to cultivating an inclusive, joyful learning community.
- Advanced degree in education or a related field, with 5+ years of teaching and 5+ years of school leadership experience.
- Expertise in curriculum development, social-emotional learning systems and frameworks, and equity and inclusion, with a track record of successfully integrating these elements into school programs.
- Demonstrate experience building and sustaining an inclusive community of faculty and staff and programs and policies that reflect and support diverse cultures and perspectives based on a demonstrated personal and professional understanding of implicit bias, systemic racism, and opportunities for equity.
- Understand how SEL and DEIJ work are inextricably integrated.
- Experience leading complex initiatives and fostering innovation in educational settings: a problem identifier and solver.
- Organize and lead specific curriculum, community, and culture events.
- Demonstrated track record of meeting and exceeding goals.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office, Google Suite, and the ability to learn new and evolving technology.



# THE SCHOOL

Keys School was founded in 1973 by two teachers who had a vision of creating an independent school that focused on the development of the “whole child.”

These teachers built a home-like place where curious students could become thoughtful, responsible, and caring individuals. From these simple beginnings, Keys School has matured into a K–8 coeducational school of 320 students without losing sight of its core values and mission. Keys provides an unique educational experience, preparing students to be confident problem solvers, exceptional communicators, and self-aware individuals who are ready for whatever their futures hold.

## ***Whole Child Philosophy***

At Keys the focus is on developing the whole child – mind, heart, body, and spirit.

Keys appreciates each child’s strengths, needs, and interests – all that makes a child unique. Social and emotional learning is embedded in all that they do at Keys, and the school knows their students learn best in a supportive environment where they are seen, heard, and valued as whole people. Students know that teachers and classmates are listening and that their voices matter. These strong relationships allow Keys’ students to feel safe. The school knows that they are only successful when kids feel comfortable and confident, and when each student is treated as a whole person with his or her own interests, passions, and goals.

## **THE PROGRAM**

Keys believes the best preparation for an ever-changing world is a strong foundation that gives children the skills to overcome challenges and create opportunities. Keys honors its students for all they are today and all they hope to become tomorrow.

## **FAST FACTS**

**320**

*Enrollment*

**2**

*Campuses, approximately 1.5 miles apart*

**76**

*Number of faculty/staff*

**18**

*Average class size*

**7:1**

*Average student-teacher ratio*

**\$1.3+ million**

*Financial assistance and tuition remission allocated annually*

**Approximately 12%**

*Students receiving tuition reduction*

### *Lower School (K–4th)*

Keys knows that students learn best by doing. Building a model city, prototyping inventions during maker time, and composing music with GarageBand give students opportunities to explore, imagine, and create. Through open-ended discovery, project work, and group discussion, students work together to tackle real world problems and begin to appreciate their impact on their community and the larger world. When students drive the process, learning becomes more meaningful, resulting in a deep and abiding enthusiasm for the pursuit of knowledge.

Keys' focus on social-emotional awareness allows for the development of secure and confident learners who are able to rise to challenges and rebound from the inevitable mistakes that come with authentic learning. The school believes that establishing positive attitudes toward learning is critical in these early years, and the school's teachers embrace a growth mindset, encouraging effort, improvement, and persistence.

To learn more about the Lower School program, click [here](#).

### *Middle School (5th–8th)*

Whether they are lounging on beanbags in the library or tinkering with circuit boards in the science lab, Keys students are asking questions and engaging each other in lively discussion. Students collaborate on projects and support one another as they challenge assumptions, imagine possibilities, and arrive at new understandings about the world around them. Dissections in the lab, ceramic work in the art studio, and robotics races on the basketball court build confidence and creativity, and help students grow resilient as they figure things out for themselves.

Teachers create an atmosphere that is both safe and challenging, and mistakes are valued as an essential part of the learning process. Keys values and makes time for reflection, supporting students as they develop a deep awareness of themselves as learners and as people.

To learn more about the Middle School program, click [here](#).



# THE SCHOOL

## CAMPUS & GEOGRAPHY

Keys' Lower School nurtures young learners on a dedicated campus with classrooms surrounding an outdoor space that includes a beautifully landscaped playground and outdoor dining facilities. From Maker Space to Wednesday Gatherings, Keys' Lower School fosters a love of learning while building strong foundations in literacy, math, science, and social-emotional skills.

On the Middle School campus, students embark on a journey of discovery and growth from bright classrooms and other facilities that include a library, gymnasium, and outdoor space with a sports court and plenty of room for students to gather and engage. From the IDEAS Lab to the student-led Dragon Chronicles newsletter, the campus life is designed to support the transition from childhood to adolescence, offering a dynamic curriculum that challenges students

academically while nurturing their social and emotional development.

Palo Alto, CA, lies at the heart of Silicon Valley, offering a unique blend of innovation, education, and community. Home to Stanford University and numerous technology companies, the city maintains a distinctive character through its tree-lined streets, diverse neighborhoods, and vibrant downtown. Residents enjoy excellent public spaces, including numerous parks and nature preserves, year-round outdoor activities enabled by the temperate climate, and easy access to San Francisco and the Bay Area. The city's highly educated and international population creates a dynamic community that values both academic excellence and cultural diversity. From its farmers' markets and local festivals to its world-class cultural institutions and proximity to the broader Bay Area's amenities, Palo Alto provides an engaging environment for families and professionals alike.



# PROCEDURE TO APPLY

*Keys School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, national or ethnic origin, veteran status, genetic information, or any other status protected under local, state, or federal laws.*

Interested candidates should submit via [https://bit.ly/Keys\\_AHCCC\\_AppForm](https://bit.ly/Keys_AHCCC_AppForm) the following materials confidentially in one, single PDF file:

- A cover letter indicating the candidate's particular interest in and qualifications for the position
- A current resume
- A statement of educational philosophy
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five references, including at least two recent supervisors. References should speak to the applicant's ability to be an effective educator and administrator, to work successfully with children, and to work collaboratively and collegially with adults (references will be contacted only with the candidate's permission). Please indicate your relationship with each reference (i.e. supervisor, colleague, or direct report).

*Salary Range: \$230,000–\$240,000*

Please address any questions by email to [maryrose@strategenius.org](mailto:maryrose@strategenius.org) or by phone at 415-881-7105.



## SEARCH CALENDAR

**February 28, 2025**  
*Application Deadline*

**March 14–24, 2025**  
*Semifinalist Interviews*

**Week of March 31, 2025**  
*Finalist Interviews*

**April 2025**  
*Announcement*

**July 2025**  
*Start Date*

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