National Association of Independent Schools

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

HEADS

The primary responsibility of the head of an independent school is to carry out the school's stated mission. While there are profoundly different ways to accomplish this goal, NAIS offers the following principles as guideposts for all heads engaged in this rewarding, complex job.

1. The head works in partnership with the board of trustees to establish and refine the school's mission; articulates the mission to all constituencies — students, faculty and staff, parents, alumni/ae, and the community; and supports the mission in working with all constituencies.
2. The head oversees the shaping of the school's program and the quality of life in the school community.
3. The head establishes an effective manner of leadership and appropriately involves members of the administration and faculty in decisionmaking.
4. The head is responsible for attracting, retaining, developing, and evaluating qualified faculty and staff.
5. The head is accessible, within reason, and communicates effectively with all constituencies.
6. The head is responsible for financial management, maintenance of the physical plant, strategic planning, and fund raising.
7. The head ensures that every element of school life reflects the principles of equity, justice, and the dignity of each individual.
8. The head is alert to his or her role within the broader networks of schools, school leaders, and the community.
9. The head cooperates with heads of other independent schools to ensure that the principles of good practice of all school operations, especially those of admission, marketing, faculty recruitment, and fund raising, demonstrate integrity at all levels of the school.

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