



**THE OAKRIDGE SCHOOL**  
Arlington, Texas

**HEAD OF SCHOOL**  
Start Date: July 2022  
[theoakridgeschool.org](http://theoakridgeschool.org)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES



## MISSION

*To inspire students to seek their full potential in academics, the arts, and athletics in a challenging and nurturing environment that cultivates social responsibility, mutual respect, and personal integrity.*

## OVERVIEW

When you enter The Oakridge School campus - a self-described “happy place with happy people” - there is a distinct feeling of genuine welcome, high energy, and warmth of strong relationships. The folks at daily drop-off and pick-up greet each person with a smile and a hello, be it student, faculty, or staff. This thriving, diverse community of learners enjoys a beautifully built-out, state-of-the-art campus, tucked into a pastoral setting next to the Lake Arlington Golf Course. On campus, you are in a city of 400,000, but there is no hint of the city in sight. The pristine care evident in the grounds and facilities communicates immediately that you are in a place of great pride in everything it does.

Oakridge is a highly regarded, accredited, coeducational school for students in Preschool through Grade 12. Everyone associated with Oakridge believes deeply that their school is the best in the area, is an exceptional place for children to learn and grow, and is an institution that is making a difference. For the faculty, Oakridge is a fulfilling and enjoyable place to teach. As an academic community dedicated to the whole-child, Oakridge combines a robust, college preparatory curriculum with opportunities for individual growth and enrichment and community engagement. Located at the far western portion of Arlington, just yards from the Fort Worth city limits, the school is positioned in a highly competitive DFW Metroplex independent and public school market offering many strong and viable school choices. For approximately 700 students, 126 teachers, a supportive team of administrative staff, involved parents, and a legion of faithful alumni, Oakridge is *home*.

Oakridge has experienced remarkably consistent Head of School leadership from its founding. Beginning with a 1979 stint in a rented church space with 89 students, followed by two other temporary facilities in east Fort Worth, the school moved little by little into the current campus, buildings being constructed over several years. After brief service at its founding by Peter Ensor, Andy Broadus became

## FAST FACTS

Founded: 1979

Enrollment: 700

Students of color: 42%

Counties/cities represented in student body:  
9/39

Total faculty: 126

Faculty with advanced degrees: 50%

Student/teacher ratio: 12 to 1

Annual financial aid awarded: \$2M

Operating budget: \$13.6M

Endowment: \$2M

Accreditation: The Independent Schools  
Association of the Southwest (ISAS)



Headmaster in July 1981. Mr. Broadus served with distinction as the Head of School until 2007. At the time of his retirement, Andy Broadus assumed the role of President, an emeritus position focused on fundraising. Jon Kellam, a teacher and administrator mentored by Mr. Broadus, was promoted to the Head of School position. For the past 14 years, Mr. Kellam has overseen an array of facility and program enhancements with zeal and whole-heartedness. Together the leadership duo of Broadus and Kellam has served the school for nearly four decades. Their consistent leadership has created a positive pattern of continual growth and improvement and a culture of pride and loyalty.

The school community, Search Committee, and Board of Regents now seek a new leader who recognizes and appreciates the school's history and traditions of today but is equally poised and inspired to lead Oakridge into its ideal future. The next Head will be an experienced educational leader who will be devoted to the school's mission, culture, and programs. This is an exceptional opportunity to advance an outstanding school.

## GOVERNANCE

A 16-member Board of Regents, that includes one Lifetime Regent, governs The Oakridge School. Regents serve three-year terms. The Search Chair will become the Chairperson of the Board of Regents in the first year of the new Head of School's tenure. Chairpersons serve a two-year term, with the option for a third year.



## THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

A strong and cohesive Administrative Team is in place to support the new Head of School. The Administrative Team includes the Assistant Head of School; Chief Financial Officer; Division Heads for Early Childhood Center, Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools; Director of Admission; Director of Athletics; Director of Facilities; Director of Advancement; and Director of Technology & Modern Learning.

## ACADEMICS

### Early Childhood Center

The Early Child Center (ECC) provides the beginning academic and social development experiences for the school. Preschool provides a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday program as well as a five-day option. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs offer a five-day program each week.

The ECC believes that concepts introduced to children should carefully be selected appropriately for the young student's developmental age and life experiences. Teachers use the art of discovery and engage students in experiential learning. ECC believes that children have a right to be children. If children leave the ECC loving to learn and feeling good about themselves and their accomplishments, the teachers firmly believe they have done their job.

### Lower School

In Lower School, students in first through fourth grades learn to think critically, solve problems, and use their imaginations creatively. The team of dedicated, caring professionals have a passion for children and learning. Classrooms are vibrant, joyful places where children are nurtured and challenged every



day. Lower School students not only increase their understanding of the world through thoughtful problem solving, they also grow in developing a strong character. Oakridge believes good character and nice manners are the foundation for long-term success for each of its students.

All Lower School students enjoy daily reading, writing, math, social studies, science, and physical education instruction. Art, music, and Spanish are important weekly additions. Carefully selected field trips enrich classroom study units throughout the year, and all students participate in musical productions, plays, art shows, and field day. Students also have many opportunities to learn responsible citizenship as they help others in our community and world through service projects.

A walk through the hallways and classrooms gives a sense of the delight, affection, and pride. This warm environment is an important aspect of the unique school culture.

### **Middle School**

The Middle School embodies the philosophy of Oakridge by providing a challenging educational program with emphasis on the total development of each student. The clearly stated goal of the Middle School is to prepare students for both higher education and for life. Students utilize the hands-on curriculum to guarantee daily opportunities to connect, communicate, collaborate, and create. Faculty and administrators stress academic excellence, high moral and ethical standards, honor, respect of others, and the pursuit of knowledge as a life-long experience.

The Middle School is divided into two separate divisions. The Lower House (LHMS) consists of grades five and six, and grades seven and eight comprise the Upper House (UHMS). Each division of the Middle School has its own faculty, programs, and curriculum. The curriculum provides sound instruction in all academic disciplines, exploration of the fine arts, and a strong physical education and athletic program. Students in the Lower House are required to study language arts, fine arts, math, general and earth



science, world history, world language (French or Spanish), and physical education. The fine arts program in the fifth grade consists of nine weeks each of choir, art, drama, and strings. In sixth grade, students take Design Thinking and begin to focus their fine arts study by choosing one of the arts each semester.

The Upper House curriculum includes English, honors English, inquiry based design, pre-algebra, honors pre-algebra, algebra I, honors algebra I, honors geometry, life and physical science, world language (French or Spanish), choir, art, drama, and strings, as well as competitive athletics.

### **Upper School**

The Oakridge Upper School goal is to prepare young people for college and life. A well-balanced academic core challenges students to succeed beyond Upper School. All students have the opportunity to study four years of English, math, history, science, and world languages. Qualified students may take honors and Advanced Placement level courses in each of the disciplines. A wide variety of electives ranging from the fine arts (music, acting, and art) to specialized courses such as forensic science and integrated media are offered as well. All students are required to take a minimum of two years of classes categorized as fine arts. In all classes, the faculty is committed to providing the best learning opportunity for the students. The passion and preparation from the faculty are second to none.

In 2017-18, the Upper School adopted a customized, modified block schedule. Students take five academic core courses, one elective, one seminar (or alternatively, a second elective), and one study hall. In a traditional week, the block is A-B-A-B-C with initiative time every A or B afternoon. Initiatives are focused on character, extracurricular opportunities, writing, public speaking, problem solving, career exploration, and college preparation. The Upper School continues to modify and improve the schedule. Combined with the academic program, Oakridge offers a variety of activities for its students ranging from a number of campus organizations to various sports opportunities. The goal is to offer a well-



rounded education where students balance their obligations in academics, arts, and athletics.

Oakridge's highly-personalized college counseling program is designed to work with students from their freshman through their senior years. The program's goal in the freshman and sophomore years is to familiarize students with the process that will lead to the most suitable choice of institution. During the junior and senior years, the three member Office of College Advising and program focuses on the actual process of college selection and application. One-hundred percent of graduates are accepted into four-year colleges and universities.

## TECHNOLOGY

Technology has long played a critical part in the instructional program at Oakridge. The school community believes technology should be seamlessly woven into the learning process, enhancing curriculum across disciplines and grade levels, and providing students with the skills to use technology in ways that will benefit them now and in the future. The entire technology experience, referred to as Modern Learning, is supported by one of the most long-standing BYOL programs in the country. Modern Learning supports and facilitates project-

## COLLEGE MATRICULATION

College and university acceptances for recent classes include the following, among others:

American University of Paris  
Austin College  
Bard College  
Baylor University  
Boston University  
Bucknell University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
College of William & Mary  
Colorado College  
Davidson College  
Emory University  
Florida State University  
Georgetown University  
Howard University  
Johns Hopkins University  
Louisiana State University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
McGill University  
New York University  
Northwestern University  
Pepperdine University  
Rice University  
Southern Methodist University  
Stanford University  
Texas A&M University  
Texas Tech University  
Trinity University  
United States Air Force Academy  
University of Alabama  
University of Arizona  
University of California at Berkeley  
University of California at Los Angeles  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Texas at Austin  
University of Virginia  
Vanderbilt University  
Yale University



based and collaborative learning as well as interdisciplinary projects. It involves information and media literacy, digital communication, and global interdependence.

Oakridge has been a pioneer in the utilization of technology in learning. It has sponsored an annual national symposium/conference on campus to promote new techniques and uses for technology in the student experience at all levels.

## THE ARTS

The fine arts program at Oakridge is a comprehensive, sequentially-developed education. The fine arts are viewed as integral parts of an education, creating an atmosphere of trust and the ability to inspire overall artistic risk-taking while developing a lifelong love of the arts. The program is not only for the “talented few” that are concerned with acquiring skills and seeking acceptance to post-secondary fine arts education, but also for students who find personal enjoyment in understanding unique voices of artistic expression.

The arts program begins with the youngest students and continues throughout the entire school experience in the following areas: performing arts—music, choir, orchestra, theatre; visual arts—ceramics, sculpture, studio arts; integrated media—film/videography, graphic design, photography; and private lessons—piano, strings, voice. Students have opportunities to participate in several juried arts award and festival programs, including the annual ISAS Arts Festival.



## ATHLETICS

The goal of athletics at Oakridge is to inspire athletes to reach their full potential and to prepare young men and women for lives of responsibility and leadership in a competitive and changing world.

The Athletic Department now has one of the most outstanding athletic facilities in the state. A recent \$16M capital project was just completed that includes new fields for all major sports. The highly qualified and outstanding coaching staff designs skill training and practices with a mindset of achieving program goals. Beyond athletic skills, the athletics programs promote integrity, courage, personal responsibility, and working with others to achieve a common goal. Twelve sports are offered at the Middle School level, with 15 at the Upper School level.

The Class of 2020 included eight seniors who play college athletics in golf, baseball, volleyball, track, lacrosse, field hockey, and equestrian.

Upper School teams compete in the Southwest Preparatory Conference (SPC) against other program-aligned, college preparatory independent schools. The SPC consists of Texas and Oklahoma schools from Dallas-Ft. Worth, Houston, Austin, and Oklahoma City. A full list of the 18 member schools is on the SPC website.

## CAMPUS LIFE

Belonging at Oakridge is very family-like. Throughout the school year, events and traditions bring the extended “family” together. Current students and staff, to alumni, grandparents, and friends, gather for special traditional events.



The Family Picnic kicks off the school year, and everyone looks forward to Spirit Week, the Homecoming Parade, and Homecoming football game in the fall. The Owlfest Halloween Carnival is filled with lots of fun for younger Owls and Grandparents' and Grandfriends' Day brings loved ones to campus for all ages. In the spring, Kindergarten students make an important journey to the Lower School building at the special Walk to the Future event. Friendly competition among classes marks Field Day festivities, and the Oakridge graduation ceremony is a special day to celebrate all that the seniors have accomplished.

Oakridge parents adore serving the school, notably through their organizations the Oakridge Parents' Club (OPC) and The Owl Club. OPC is composed of current parents and generates Back-to-School Fair, divisional class parties, faculty and staff appreciation lunches, snacks during finals, Owlfest (fall carnival), Holiday Treasures, and an after-prom event. The Owl Club (booster club) dedicates its efforts to the school's athletic and physical education programs by hosting an annual Golf Classic. Over the years, funds raised by these organizations have made considerable fundraising/advancement contributions and enabled the school to provide many non-budgeted items for faculty, staff, students, and the campus as a whole.

Students have a choice of 20 campus organizations and clubs. These special interest groups give students the chance to spend time in areas that are or will become special interests in their lives. Community engagement opportunities abound, including partnerships with community organizations to provide service, assistance, and support for critically important areas of need.



## PHYSICAL CAMPUS

The spacious 100-acre Oakridge School campus is a mirror reflection of the pride the community has for its school. Housing all facilities and a National Wetlands Project within its pristine green and heavily treed spaces, the campus is impeccably maintained and has been in a constant state of improvement since moving to Lake Arlington. Spur 303, a major thoroughfare in the city, divides the campus. The athletic facilities are housed across the road from the main campus. All facilities are designed to promote and support the efforts of the faculty, staff, and students and to maximize their educational and extra-curricular offerings. There are currently plans for a pedestrian bridge to connect athletics and academics. Also on the wish list are a new field house and dining space.

## ARLINGTON, TEXAS

Arlington is in the very center of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Once a sleepy and small suburban city of a population of just a few thousand, Arlington is now a thriving city with a population of 400,000. The city is the 49th most populous city in the country and seventh most populous city in Texas. Arlington is home to the University of Texas at Arlington, a thriving University with approximately 44,000 students. Economically, many large corporations call the city home. The General Motors Assembly plant is the largest employer in the city and has been the home of some of the most popular GM products since 1954.

The diverse demographics of Arlington includes approximately 50% White, 27% Hispanic, 20% Black, and 3% Pacific Islander/other. About 40% of the over 140,000 households contain children under the age of 18.



The city is the home of multiple arts, sports, and entertainment venues. Six Flags Over Texas and Hurricane Harbor Water Park provide excellent opportunities for family entertainment. The Texas Rangers and Dallas Cowboys call Arlington home. Their stadiums sit just a few yards apart in the entertainment district. The Metroplex boasts professional teams in the NFL, MLB, NBA, and NHL within an easy drive.

Theatre Arlington, Arlington Museum of Art, and the Levitt Pavilion provide multiple opportunities for cultural experiences. The Levitt Pavilion located in the heart of downtown hosts over 50 concerts per year and has had some of the country's biggest music acts on their stage. Just down the road in Dallas and Fort Worth, national theatre touring companies, music concerts, and world-class museums abound. There are a large number of community events hosted in the city. Its annual July 4th Parade ranks as one of the largest in the entire country. Texas Live, a dining and entertainment facility situated between the three professional sports stadiums, is the newest hub of community entertainment. Seasonal horseracing is available in nearby Grand Prairie at Lone Star Park.

Arlington delivers many opportunities for families within its borders, but also is just a short drive to the amenities of both Dallas, Fort Worth, and the many other thriving cities of the Metroplex.

The climate provides mild winters, crisp and beautiful autumns, beautiful springs, and very warm summers, allowing for an excellent environment for outdoor family activities and events throughout the year. Arlington is a dynamic place to live and raise a family.

Finally, Arlington's close proximity to DFW International Airport provides non-stop flights to almost every city in the world, an unmatched convenience.



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

With a measure of apprehension and excitement, The Oakridge School is preparing for a new Head of School who will usher in a new era of achievement. With exceptional pride in their past, the School stands ready to welcome and support a new Head of School who brings new perspective, fresh ideas, and maintains the high relational energy it has enjoyed from its leaders over four decades. Oakridge is striving for excellence and is dedicated to improvement. Complacency is not in its culture. While the faculty, staff, and board have worked diligently to create a dynamic, student-centered environment, each group is also cognizant that there is still important work to be accomplished.

### **Opportunities:**

- Build upon a strong family-oriented school culture where individuals are known, respected, cared for, and valued members of the Oakridge community.
- Collaborate with caring, competent, and dedicated teachers and staff who are skilled in teaching and learning and versed in current best teaching practices.
- Join a talented administrative team who is willing to go the extra mile in making the school operate smoothly and effectively.
- Partner with an engaged Board of Regents who care passionately about the school and follow best practices in school governance.
- Utilize the school's strengths to build and stabilize enrollment at a right-sized level.
- Appreciate and advance a history of diversity and inclusion that is engrained into the heart and soul of the school.
- Steward well-maintained facilities, as well as potential additions that will enhance and support the school's program.
- Engage actively in fundraising to increase the endowment and support new initiatives.



- Embrace and develop the school’s long-standing service outreach and cooperative efforts with the City of Arlington.
- Appreciate the legacy of Andy Broadus and Jon Kellam and their special role in the community, leverage it to advantage for all, and invite their participation when mutually determined appropriate.
- Settle in a place where substantial tenure is the norm, long relationships are expected and begin to plan the celebration of The Oakridge School’s 50th anniversary in just a few short years.
- Head a school recognized for educational excellence as accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS) and lead regionally.

### **Challenges:**

- Become the new “Face of Oakridge:” Two individuals have provided steadfast, visionary leadership for almost the entire school history. Their calm, approachable, caring, involved, decisive leadership style is revered and woven into the fabric of daily life, from greeting students at the start of every day to the ongoing support and attendance at multiple school activities. The new Head will need to have similar warm personal qualities and be courageous and confident enough to forge their own path, finding their own special ways to bond with the various constituents of the school, while honoring the school’s culture and history.
- Aggressively address enrollment challenges in the face of rising tuitions, changing demographics, and increased competition from nearby public, charter, and independent schools. New techniques and expansion of market will need to be developed and executed.
- Develop and articulate a compelling case for the school’s curriculum, programs, culture, and track record of success with prospective and current parents, donors, and the wider educational community in both Arlington and surrounding cities.
- Attend to the health and wellness of both the student and adult community. By 2022, all community members will still be navigating pandemic aftereffects. The next Head will need to be attuned to and supportive of the wellness of the community to ensure that teaching and learning continue successfully.



- Lead diversity and inclusion initiatives, especially focused on increasing diversity among the faculty, administration, and staff with the ability to respectfully navigate diverse cultural and social situations.
- Plan strategically and manage change in the post COVID-19 world where a new normal will emerge in many aspects of school operations and leadership.

## **DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The successful candidate to lead The Oakridge School will exhibit, in varying degrees, the following characteristics, qualities, skills, and experiences:

- Love and respect for what is best for children.
- A tireless servant-leader with a strong moral compass and character traits that align with The Oakridge School's culture and values.
- A natural relationship builder who enjoys knowing and being known by students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.
- A team builder who develops talent, listens, effectively delegates, and empowers the school community to be their very best.
- A demeanor that is empathetic, flexible, warm, connected, and approachable.
- A creative problem-solver with a strong sense of the value of listening prior to action and an ability to calmly manage difficult conversations and work through differences of opinion.
- A forward-looking advocate for generating continual and ongoing improvements and innovations in Oakridge's programs with an eye toward optimizing effective use of technology.
- A skilled communicator who is energized by fundraising and marketing the school to both internal and external constituents and who can effectively share the Oakridge story.

- Ability to develop strategies and formulate effective marketing and branding approaches to optimize enrollment and curtail attrition.
- Exhibition and expectation of an unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- A sense of humor paired with the optimism necessary to find joy in leadership.

## TO APPLY

We appreciate your thoughtful review of The Oakridge School Head of School position description and hope you will be interested in becoming an applicant for this position. To apply, candidates should submit the following materials electronically (preferably as separate PDFs, titled with applicant name and date) to both Rhonda Durham and Bob Windham, Senior Consultants at Carney, Sandoe & Associates:

- A cover letter explaining the specific reasons for your interest in and general qualifications for becoming the Head of School at The Oakridge School.
- A current résumé.
- A personal statement regarding your view of educational leadership and as it relates to the role of Head of School.
- List of five references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will be contacted later in the process and only with candidate permission). The search will be confidential until finalist candidates are selected and announced.

### **Rhonda Durham**

Senior Consultant

rhonda.durham@carneysandoe.com

### **Bob Windham**

Senior Consultant

bob.windham@carneysandoe.com

### **Estimated Search Timeline**

Spring-Early Summer Mid-June - Candidate recruitment and engagement Candidate application materials due Search Update

Late July - Semifinalist Interviews

September - Finalist Interviews and School Visits

September/October - Appointment