Head of Middle School (Grades 5–8)

The Hewitt School

New York, NY

Founded in 1920, Hewitt is an independent girls' day school serving approximately 500 students in grades K–12. Hewitt's program is intentionally constructed around four academic pillars – presence, empathy, research, and purpose – that shape the way teachers teach, students learn, and, ultimately, the way both teachers and students live their lives: beyond the expected, beyond the easy answer, and beyond what seemed possible.

In keeping with its 101-year history, Hewitt's challenging academic program pays close attention to each individual girl, thanks to a small-school environment and the dedication of faculty committed to helping each girl and young woman discover her unique identity and potential.

The middle school enrolls approximately 150 students in grades 5–8. Immersed in the research on how best to teach and support girls, the middle school faculty demonstrates that the empathic connection between girls and teachers helps them learn better, collaborate effectively, and take risks in a safe and encouraging space. In her formative middle school years, a Hewitt girl discovers the ways in which she simultaneously gives shape to, and is shaped by, her strengths and talents as well as her position in her community, culture, and history.

For a position to begin in July 2022, Hewitt is seeking an experienced middle school educational leader who is passionate about girls' education, inspired by the school's exciting new strategic vision, and eager to join a thriving school community where each girl is known and empowered to achieve her best.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 11, 2021

WICKENDEN ASSOCIATES
A DRG AFFILIATE

THE HEWITT SCHOOL IN BRIEF

In preparation for its centennial in 2020, the Hewitt community engaged in a comprehensive strategic visioning process, thinking ambitiously and boldly about designing a better way for girls and young women to prepare for college, the workforce, and a life of meaning and purpose. The process resulted in a new mission and vision:

The New Mission

The Hewitt School inspires girls and young women to become game changers and ethical leaders who forge an equitable, sustainable, and joyous future.

Vision Commitments

1. Redesign learning around transdisciplinary real-world challenges to build students' leadership capacity and sense of purpose.
2. Reimagine where school happens to take full advantage of immersive, collaborative, and hands-on learning in New York City.
3. Redefine women's leadership by convening student, academic, and industry leaders to challenge, transcend, and transform conventional assumptions about gender, power, and leadership in our society.

Facts and Figures

Founded:	1920
Location:	Three adjacent townhouses on East 75th St. on Manhattan's Upper East Side house the main campus. Lower school is located one block away.
Affiliations:	Accredited by New York State Association of Independent Schools; member, National Association of Independent Schools, National Coalition of Girls' Schools, ISAAGNY
Enrollment:	Approximately 500 girls K–12; approximately 150 in middle school
Student: Faculty Ratio:	6: 1
Students of Color:	30%
Tuition (all-inclusive):	$55,450
Financial Aid:	$5.4 million to 30% of student body
Full-Time Faculty:	91, including 31 in middle school; 54 hold advanced degrees
Faculty/Staff of Color:	35%

DEFINING STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES OF THE HEWITT SCHOOL

The Hewitt School, originally known as Miss Hewitt's Classes, was established by Caroline Hewitt in 1920. The founder's own words — *It is the touch of life upon life that matters most in a school* — established from the outset the quality of attention to each individual girl that remains a hallmark of Hewitt to this day.

Dr. Tara Christie Kinsey joined Hewitt in 2015 as Head of School. Dr. Kinsey has brought to Hewitt a dedication to putting the latest and best research on girls into practice in the classroom and at home, embracing the school's small size to celebrate each girl as a unique individual, and encouraging young women to tune into what matters most to them while developing an enduring sense of purpose. Under her leadership, there has been a resurgence of school pride, a renewed appreciation for the unique value of a Hewitt education, and a commitment to innovation in girls' education.

Hewitt's educational program schoolwide is carefully constructed around four academic pillars: presence, empathy, research, and purpose. From kindergarten through commencement, Hewitt faculty members exemplify thoughtful presence, social-emotional and intellectual empathy, research-driven teaching, and a personal sense of purpose as they expertly deliver a curriculum that stimulates each girl's capacity for reflective engagement.

Students and Families

Located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, Hewitt attracts a diverse group of students from throughout New York City, as well as New Jersey and Connecticut. In 2020-2021, the financial aid program supported 30 percent of the student body, with awards totaling $5.4 million to families representing a wide range of income levels.

Enrolling approximately 500 girls K–12, Hewitt is the smallest girls' school on the Upper East Side. It is a close-knit and supportive community where the girls form strong bonds with one another and with their teachers. Students, faculty, and families report a strong sense of kinship with the mission and values. An active Parents' Association supports the school's work.

Location and Facilities

Nestled on a quiet block on East 75th Street near Central Park, Hewitt's main campus includes three adjacent buildings (Gregory Hall, Stillman Hall, and Winslow Hall), which are home to middle and upper school students, admissions, and other administrative offices. The dedicated lower school building, McKelvey Hall, is located just a block away. An exclusive arrangement with the nearby Theater at St. Jean gives all Hewitt students access to a 206-seat professional theater with state-of-the-art lighting, sound, and technical elements for both productions and classes. Athletic and wellness facilities are located nearby.

Hewitt's urban setting constitutes an invaluable educational resource, particularly in light of the school's new strategic vision and its commitment to broadening students' perspectives through real-world learning opportunities beyond the Hewitt campus. The sixth-grade science curriculum, for example, centers on urban ecology and utilizes nearby Central Park as a location for field study in geology and ecology.

The Administrative Team

Head of School Tara Christie Kinsey has assembled a talented, high-performing, collaborative, and cohesive leadership team. The academic leadership team reporting to the Head of School includes the Assistant Head of School for Learning and Innovation, the Director of Equity and Community Life, and the three division heads. The

full leadership team includes the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Admissions and Enrollment, the Director of Marketing and Communications, the Director of Advancement, the Director of Technology, and the Director of Facilities and Operations.

The Faculty

Among the most appealing aspects of the Middle School Head position is the opportunity to work with the Hewitt faculty: an extraordinarily collaborative, committed, empathetic, and professional group with a teamwork-first orientation. Hewitt's faculty members take very seriously their role as teachers of girls as well as teachers of a particular subject.

Fully invested as both teachers and learners, the middle school faculty have focused intently over the past few years on curricular scope and sequence, resulting in a strong and innovative educational program that places Hewitt in the forefront of research-based education for girls. Teachers coach one another through professional learning communities and peer-led workshops that sustain Hewitt's commitment to a girl-centric education. Each teacher also has ready access to a variety of resources and opportunities, both on-site and off-campus, to support mission-aligned, age-appropriate, and discipline-specific curricular design and lesson planning. A summer grant program supports faculty experiences that align with the school's four academic pillars.

The Commitment to Research

In keeping with its wholehearted commitment to a research-informed approach, Hewitt has for the past several years invited prominent visiting scholars and experts to work with faculty and families. Examples include:

- Acclaimed educator and author Rachel Simmons, who has consulted with the faculty and families on social media engagement and strategic projects to support young women's leadership development.
- Dr. Lisa Damour, the Director of Laurel School's Center for Research on Girls and author of several books on raising healthy young women, who provides practical guidance to families, faculty, and staff.
- Dr. Charlotte Jacobs, co-director of the Independent School Teaching Residency program at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, executive director of the Girls Justice League in Philadelphia, and co-author of ***Teaching Girls: How Teachers and Parents Can Reach Their Brains and Hearts.*** She works with the Hewitt community to support positive identity development and consults with the faculty, staff, and families on how to help students build confidence and a positive sense of self in the face of gender stereotypes.
- Funded in part by an educational leadership grant from The Edward E. Ford Foundation, Sarah Odell joined Hewitt this July as the school's inaugural learning and innovation researcher. Her work will focus primarily on the upper school and its faculty as the school evolves its program to focus on competency-based, transdisciplinary learning opportunities.
- Dr. Erika Kitzmiller, a faculty member at Barnard College and a historian of race, inequality, and education, will serve as a consultant for the 2021-2022 school year. She will spend one full day a week observing classroom practice, conducting student and teacher focus groups, meeting with administrators and faculty, and leading workshops customized to faculty needs.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Hewitt's middle school invites girls to embrace early adolescence as a time of exploration, transformation, and joy. The learning culture is rooted in empathy, and Hewitt girls cultivate this essential habit of mind as both an intellectual and emotional practice. Middle school girls learn to support one another during a time of significant personal change, both physiological and cognitive, and their teachers serve as coaches and mentors as girls learn to value their unique inner voice and resist pressures to conform. In this way, girls begin to develop a sense of purpose, exploring their shifting sense of self as they move from childhood to early adolescence.

In keeping with Hewitt's pillar of presence, the division emphasizes learning that prioritizes investigation, reflection, and revision. Reflective writing assignments, collaborative workshops, multi-stepped art assignments, inquiry-based science learning, and mathematical problem-solving challenges all help students to pause and focus.

The middle school advisory program supports girls through an emphasis on community building, empathy, goal setting, culturally responsive practice, and emotional self-regulation. Girls begin each day in morning meeting with their advisory group and have extended learning blocks for advisory curriculum in their schedules. Advisories also serve as a laboratory for connecting with others across differences, and for learning about identity, diversity and community. In the fall and spring, students lead a conference for their parents or guardians and advisor, for which they plan carefully in terms of goals they set in the beginning of the year. Life skills and wellness classes encourage girls to practice healthy conversation and conflict resolution skills, learn about their bodies and emotions, and explore difficult feelings as part of cultivating a supportive community. The student support team includes the division head and the middle school deans, as well as the Counselor, Learning Specialist, Assistant Director of Equity and Community Life, and the School Nurse.

In support of the school's vision commitments, a group of faculty members known as the learning experience design team is working to develop cross-disciplinary and disciplinary standards in grades K-12 and support other faculty in their innovative curriculum design. Hewitt's middle school faculty, guided by the design team, are actively developing experiences that prepare students to be ethical leaders who work effectively with others to address complex and systemic real-world challenges.

Often, the path to such learning begins with interdisciplinary connections. For example, sixth-grade students last year formed nonfiction book groups in English class and worked intensively to develop reading, research, note-taking, and argumentation skills. In science, the same book groups formed research teams focused on understanding the science behind climate change through investigations into industrial farming, industrial meat production, and the harmful impact of global warming on ocean ecosystems.

The Middle School Curriculum in Brief

- The Writing-as-Thinking methodology lies at the heart of Hewitt's approach to writing across the curriculum, and teachers in many disciplines, including mathematics and modern languages, incorporate these strategies into daily classroom practice. The English curriculum employs the readers' and writers' workshop model during fifth and sixth grades, evolving into reading circles and class-shared texts in grades 7 and 8. Every girl writes in class each day.
- The Math curriculum is rooted in a problem-solving approach informed by research on growth mindset and stereotype threat. A workshop model helps to teach collaboration and to support differentiated learning, as the middle school does not track students by ability into different sections.
- Immersed in an inquiry-based model of Science instruction, the middle school curriculum features extensive hands-on experimentation and exploration in the lab, around the building, and in the world beyond the immediate neighborhood. Opportunities to learn about the history of women in science as well as to meet role models in STEM fields provide girls an expansive vision of what they can do, now and in the future, as scientists.
- Committed to teaching girls to think as historians, the History and Social Sciences department emphasizes the study of primary sources and case studies.
- The interdisciplinary Educational Technology program is designed to provide the tools, skills, and confidence girls need to become tomorrow's innovators, inventors, and leaders. Students use Chromebooks to communicate with faculty, view coursework, and turn in assignments. The emphasis on technology integration across disciplines allows students to learn programming and design fundamentals in the context of specific classes. Middle school robotics teams have brought home excellence, design, and teamwork awards from various VEX IQ competitions.
- The Modern Language Program allows students to study either French or Spanish, with classes conducted primarily in the target language. Beginning in grade 7, students add Latin to their schedule.
- Hewitt's founder deeply valued literature and the arts as central to education. Middle school performing arts offerings include music, dance, and drama at each grade level. The visual arts curriculum encompasses 2D, 3D, and digital projects, as well as set design and costuming.
- Service Learning is incorporated into both the advisory and academic programs through activities such as Family Service Day, Central Park Clean-up, and service trips. Each grade participates in projects that connect directly to the curriculum.
- Beginning in grade 5, girls may join competitive athletic teams. Offerings include cross country, soccer, volleyball, basketball, squash, badminton, outdoor track and field, as well as strength, conditioning, and running.

- Electives program options have included VEX Robotics, Math Olympiad, Social Media for Change Makers, Sustainable Cities, Enterprising Writers, Poetry and Watercolor, Choreography, Journalism, and Literary Magazine/Creative Writing. Recess clubs include Student Council and the Social Justice Committee.

For a fuller description of the challenging and inquiry-based middle school curriculum, visit *www.hewittschool.org/academics/middle-school*.

Diversity and Inclusivity

Hewitt empowers and expects our community members to embrace multiple points of view, to engage others with empathy and integrity, and to champion equity and justice in all areas of our lives.

– Hewitt Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity

Diversity and inclusivity stand as foundational commitments that guide every aspect of teaching and learning at Hewitt. In the belief that a diverse and inclusive community is essential to educating girls and young women to be positive contributors and citizens of the world, the Director of Equity and Community Life oversees a broad and growing range of programs for faculty and staff, parents and guardians, and students, grounded in anti-bias education goals.

These anti-bias goals include building a positive self-concept, appreciating the range of human diversity using accurate language, recognizing unfairness, and demonstrating empowerment and skills to act against prejudice and discrimination. Given the K-12 institutional goals that focus on increasing proportional, curricular, and interactional diversity, Hewitt continues to:

1. prioritize the recruitment of an increasingly diverse faculty, staff, and student body;
2. carefully examine existing curricular content to determine the breadth and depth of perspectives; and
3. promote deliberate interactions across lines of difference.

Throughout middle school and across disciplines, girls' voices are centered as they are presented with "curriculum as window and mirror," which allows them to consider the experiences of others as well as reflect on their own personal perspectives. Middle school girls learn about local and global histories as well as traditionally marginalized communities and develop a more historically accurate perspective through the study of social hierarchies. The English curriculum incorporates voices from a wide breadth of cultures and experiences, and the languages department incorporates the voices of writers from across the Spanish-speaking and Francophone world.

The Office of Equity and Community Life works with the Diversity and Inclusivity Steering Committee — composed of faculty and staff from across divisions and departments — to lead the Hewitt community in establishing a more empathetic and equitable school culture by guiding conversations about diversity and inclusivity, facilitating affinity groups, organizing community events, and collecting and sharing stories. Hewitt maintains ongoing relationships with professional organizations, hosts its own SEED group; and sends a cohort of faculty, staff, and students to the annual NAIS People of Color Conference and Student Diversity Leadership Conference. Hewitt is also committed to advancing and championing an inclusive and expansive understanding and appreciation of girlhood throughout the middle school program.

As the school observed its centennial in 2020, an Anti-Racism Task Force was created and charged with evaluating and recommending schoolwide protocols, policies, systems, and infrastructure to ensure that Hewitt becomes an actively anti-racist school. After three months of meetings and deliberations, the Task Force developed a comprehensive set of recommendations in the areas of pedagogy and curriculum, community and care, and leadership and governance. Furthering that work will be a vital component of the Middle School Head's portfolio in the years ahead.

To review the full set of Anti-Racism Task Force recommendations approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2020, visit www.hewittschool.org/student-life/diversity-equity-inclusivity.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Head of Middle School reports to the Head of School and is charged with both daily operations and long-term planning for the middle division (grades 5–8) of the school.

Middle School Program and Daily Life

- Manage the day-to-day life of middle school in collaboration with the student support team, grade level deans, advisors, counselor, administrative assistant, and faculty.
- Collaborate with the Assistant Head of School for Learning and Innovation on curriculum development and review.
- Remain current in research on girls' early adolescent development to ensure that the division's pedagogy aligns with evidence-based best practices.
- Collaborate with the academic leadership team on K–12 scope and sequence of all programming.
- Partner closely with the school's learning experience design team in supporting faculty as they develop a fully competency-based program that allows teachers to give students regular, specific, and actionable feedback.
- Work with the Office of Equity and Community Life (ECL) on diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy and programming.
- Serve as the lead storyteller for middle school to ensure that clear, accurate, and inspiring information is consistently shared with the full community.

- Communicate with parents and guardians about the individual experience of their daughters and collaborate with the middle school team to ensure clear and consistent implementation of support and enrichment plans.
- Guide parents and guardians through coffee talks, evening presentations, etc., in how to best support their daughters in alignment with the school's mission and philosophy.

Mentoring and Management

- Supervise the Assistant to the Head of Middle School, the grade level deans, Coordinator of Student Life, Counselor, and Learning Specialist.
- Partner with the Assistant Head of School for Learning and Innovation to manage and support faculty growth.
- Supervise faculty who teach in middle school to ensure commitment to the school's mission and diversity and inclusivity statements, in classroom practice and community participation.
- Serve on the academic leadership team and on Hewitt's leadership team.
- Visit classes regularly each week for informal observations and conduct formal observations as needed or upon faculty request, with documentation in Folio as appropriate.
- Meet regularly with all middle school faculty to discuss their experience and personal and professional goals, and to give and receive feedback.

Operations

- Meet regularly with the middle school support team to review individual student concerns and monitor developmental trends by grade.
- Hold one-on-one meetings with all direct reports to ensure progress on individual and divisional goals.
- Facilitate regular division faculty meetings focused on developmental needs of middle school.
- Manage, in consultation with the Assistant Head and Office of Equity and Community Life, all hiring for middle school faculty.

- Manage middle school budget to prioritize spending in line with school mission and programmatic needs.
- Address individual parent concerns and questions.
- Meet with middle school parent association representatives to ensure communication between the association and the school.
- Support the scheduling process in collaboration with the Assistant Head of School for Learning and Innovation.
- Manage the middle school report process and student-led conferences.
- Manage applications to other schools and summer programs through the division assistant's office.
- Partner with admissions to recruit mission-aligned families and students to the school.

Undertake other duties as assigned by the Head of School.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

The next Head of Middle School will join Hewitt on the heels of celebrating the school's centennial, an occasion the school marked with an exciting strategic visioning process that engaged the entire school community. At the center of the process was the core question: *How can Hewitt invent a new educational model that better empowers girls and young women to become the game-changing leaders of tomorrow?*

The school is eager to welcome an innovative middle school leader who will engage wholeheartedly in the transformational thinking that is under way at Hewitt in response to a rapidly shifting educational landscape. The senior administrative team is enthusiastically leading conversations aimed at positioning Hewitt squarely in the forefront of research-based education for girls in order to ensure that Hewitt graduates are uniquely well prepared and positioned to make a positive difference in their communities. With the four academic pillars providing a strong philosophical framework, Hewitt will offer the next Head of Middle School a vibrant professional climate and myriad opportunities for groundbreaking leadership.

The next Head of Middle School has the opportunity to join a team committed to the evolution of the K-12 program to reflect backwards design and competency-based teaching. With a faculty committed to cultivating a learning environment that reflects the best research on how middle school girls learn and thrive, the division head will collaborate with the school's learning experience design team in supporting faculty as they develop a fully competency-based program that allows teachers to give regular, specific, and actionable feedback to girls as they participate in learning experiences connected to the world in which they live.

Specific opportunities and anticipated areas of focus awaiting the next Head of Middle School include the following:

- As the smallest of seven girls' schools located on the Upper East Side, Hewitt competes in a crowded educational marketplace. The Head of Middle School has an important role to play in supporting admissions efforts as a visible and persuasive advocate for the middle school program, both in public forums and in one-to-one engagement with prospective families.
- The faculty, including many young teachers, are passionate about teaching and eager to welcome a new leader who will provide fresh insights, thoughtful mentoring, and generous support.
- Parents and guardians are a vitally important part of the Hewitt family. The Middle School Head must be committed to communicating effectively with the parent community on a day-to-day basis and about new program and policy initiatives. The Head of Middle School should also be skilled in engaging parents and guardians individually with warmth and confidence, particularly when difficult conversations are required.
- Balancing the efforts to address the social, academic, and developmental pressures affecting girls today by strengthening social-emotional initiatives and student support services throughout the middle school program while also ensuring consistency in the enforcement of reasonable behavioral expectations for the girls.

- Advancing and championing an inclusive and expansive understanding and appreciation of girlhood throughout the middle school program.
- Balancing flexibility with structure in the oversight of faculty and staff, encouraging healthy autonomy while insisting upon appropriate accountability.
- Ensuring a strong emphasis on providing a challenging academic program in all subjects to prepare girls for the rigors of high school, college, and life.

In addition to guiding the day-to-day operations of this busy and buzzing middle school, the Head of Middle School will be a key participant in numerous school-wide curricular and cultural initiatives. The Middle School Head will be asked to work collaboratively with:

- The Assistant Head of School for Learning and Innovation on program and pedagogy, and with the other two division heads in pursuit of a unified K–12 philosophy and program.
- The Director of Admissions and Enrollment to recruit and welcome prospective and new families.
- The Director of Marketing and Communications to help tell the school's story in compelling ways.
- The Director of Equity and Community Life as a thought partner in infusing diverse perspectives into the middle school curriculum and in contributing to communications with the school community about initiatives related to anti-bias and social justice.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Ideally, candidates will offer most or all of the following attributes:

Qualifications and Experience

- Solid academic credentials, including an advanced degree.
- Substantial experience in teaching and administration at the middle school level, coupled with a deep understanding of adolescent development.
- Strong familiarity with and/or experience in girls' education.
- Fluency in technology, coupled with an understanding of its critical role in inquiry-based education.
- Exceptional communication and listening skills.
- Excellent organizational/management skills.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- A visionary, forward-thinking, and open-minded leader whose values and educational philosophy are closely aligned with Hewitt's mission and the four academic pillars.
- A passionate advocate for girls and girls' education.
- A creative team player who is eager to collaborate with division and department leaders throughout the school in support of a unified K–12 vision and program.
- An innovative thinker who will support the introduction of research-based best practices.
- A highly professional and empowering leader who will inspire, support, and challenge faculty and staff.
- A self-reflective leader with a passionate commitment to supporting diversity, inclusivity, and anti-racism.

- A confident, consistent, steady, and highly organized administrator with high standards for self and others.
- An enthusiastic and approachable person with a joyful spirit, high energy, patience, and a sense of humor.

ANTICIPATED SEARCH CALENDAR

Application Deadline	Oct. 11, 2021
Semifinalist Interviews	Oct. 30 & Nov. 6, 2021
Finalist Visits	November 2021
Appointment	Early December 2021
Starting Date	July 1, 2022

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SEARCH PROCESS

Wickenden Associates, an affiliate of DRG Talent Advisory Group, is conducting this search on behalf of The Hewitt School. To discuss this opportunity in more detail, potential candidates may contact the lead consultant:

Laura Hansen
Senior Search Consultant
lhansen@drgsearch.com

Candidates should submit **as soon as possible and no later than Monday, October 11, 2021**, an application package including the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position.
- A current résumé.
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. (We will obtain permission from candidates before contacting references.)
- A statement of educational philosophy.

Application materials should be uploaded directly on the DRG website by visiting the Hewitt School listing at *https://drgsearch.com/current-searches.*

After an initial review of applicants, the Search Committee will interview semifinalists on Saturday, October 30, and Saturday, November 6, 2021. Finalists will be invited to the school shortly thereafter for a more comprehensive series of interviews. An appointment is anticipated by early December.