

POMFRET

Heather Willis Daly

Heather holds a M.S. in Management from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and a B.A. in English and History from Wellesley College. During her time at Wellesley, she was a resident advisor and competed as a member of the soccer team.

Heather began her independent school career at Santa Catalina School in California as an Assistant Director of Admission and resident faculty member. Over the course of the next thirteen years, she held additional leadership roles on campus, including Director of Admission and Director of Financial Aid.

From there, Heather began her decade-long tenure at Hawken School in Ohio, culminating in her role as Assistant Head of School for Enrollment Management. During her time at Hawken, she worked alongside colleagues to implement significant curricular changes and innovations, putting Hawken at the forefront in national conversations in education related to service and experiential learning, community partnerships, development of signature academic programs, and creation of the Mastery Transcript Consortium. In addition, her team grew the school's student of color population from 18% to 30% of the student body, boosted overall enrollment by 173 students, and realized eight consecutive years of record enrollment.

In 2018, Heather became Dean of Admission and Financial Aid at St. Andrew's School in Delaware, increasing application numbers by 40% and achieving all-time high selectivity and enrollment figures. In the midst of the pandemic, she led the process to redesign the recruitment process, marketing materials, and comprehensive yield plan. In addition, Heather helped to create an orientation program for new students and families of color. She also worked alongside St. Andrew's Advancement Office in financial aid donor appeals, scholar selections, and stewardship efforts.

In her current role as an Associate Head at Laurel School, Heather works with the leaders of a broad array of programs: Admissions, Athletics, College Counseling, the Environmental Justice Semester Program, Food Service, Global and Exchange Programs, Marketing, the Project Adventure Challenge Course, Laurel's School Nurse, Signature Programming, Summer Programs, and Sustainability. She is also overseeing implementation of Laurel's strategic plan.

Heather has presented at numerous conferences on topics related to enrollment, financial aid, and leadership practices in schools offering experiential education. She currently serves as the Chair of the NAIS Financial Aid Advisory Task Force, advising school leaders on developing sound financial aid policies and best practices regarding financial accessibility.

Heather is married to Brendan Daly, who is an independent school science teacher. They have three children: a son at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, a daughter at the University of Richmond and a daughter at St. Andrew's School in Delaware.