



Winchester Thurston School

Director of Upper School Position Statement

Start Date: July 2026



Overview

Established in 1887, Winchester Thurston School (WT) is an independent, Junior Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, coeducational college preparatory day school in Pittsburgh, PA, serving nearly 690 students, more than 300 of which are in the Upper School.

At WT, we define success not only by our high academic standards, but also by our commitment to developing individuals of strong character. WT has been a beacon of progressive education in Pittsburgh and has led the way in educational innovation, rigorous academics, and a learning environment that better prepares students for the challenges of a rapidly changing, complex world—and admission to the most selective colleges in the nation. Students are recognized and appreciated for their academic achievement, strong character, creativity, and willingness to try new things.

WT's nationally recognized **City as Our Campus**sm is an important element of the WT experience and provides opportunities for experiential learning across all divisions and departments. As an extension of our core academic program, City as Our Campus provides meaningful, authentic experiences that engage a diversity of community members, utilize various locations in our city as learning environments, and study real-world problems as a way of enhancing student learning and preparing them to be informed and engaged citizens.

Position Summary

WT seeks a visionary, relational, and expert educator to lead its Upper School. This leader will enthusiastically embrace and advance the school's mission, lead and support a dedicated faculty, and joyfully interact with students. The Upper School community will welcome a leader who is contagiously passionate and knowledgeable about progressive education, and who will embrace our commitment to equity, inclusion, and belonging, inspire stakeholders, ensure continued innovation, and articulate well the values of a WT education.



Mission

Winchester Thurston School actively engages each student in a challenging and inspiring learning process that develops the mind, motivates the passion to achieve, and cultivates the character to serve.

Philosophy of Teaching and Learning

The Philosophy of Teaching and Learning is our Mission in practice. At Winchester Thurston School, we offer an equitable and inclusive learning experience that is grounded in our credo to “Think also of the comfort and the rights of others” and is guided by our commitments to:

- **Learn Passionately:** We empower all individuals to drive their own learning through a relevant and immersive experience.
- **Foster Community:** We embrace strong relationships as a critical component for powerful learning.
- **Embrace Diversity:** We enable individuals to understand their own identity while honoring multiple perspectives.
- **Break Boundaries:** We support deep learning that happens across disciplines and in non-traditional settings.
- **Create Change:** We nurture learners to be engaged citizens who challenge inequities, address real problems, and make an impact in our school and our city.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

As a means to fulfill our credo, “Think also of the comfort and the rights of others,” Winchester Thurston will be an inclusive community and will pursue the social and pedagogical benefits that diversity brings. We will place the highest value on enabling students to understand their own identity and those of others. It is our moral imperative to be courageous and intentional in promoting understanding, addressing bias, identifying and honoring qualities of justice, respecting multiple perspectives and contributions, and valuing the dignity of all.

Enrollment Information

WT has enjoyed annual growth thanks to its innovative curriculum and dedicated employees. In the 2025-2026 academic year, WT enrolled a total of 688 students from 69 zip codes and 35 school districts with 238 students in the Lower School, 138 students in the Middle School, and 311 students in the Upper School. More than 41% of WT’s student body are students of color. WT annually awards over \$5.2 million in financial aid.

Our Vision for the Future

WT is engaged in a dynamic strategic process that takes a bold approach to imagining our future. Our strategic priorities are to Reimagine Learning, Rethink Time & Space, Strengthen Community, and Support Employees. There are numerous opportunities for our next Director of Upper School to lead meaningful and significant change with the support and guidance of a passionate faculty. The strategic vision overview is available on our [website](#).



Opportunities

WT is seeking an energetic, entrepreneurial leader to lead the Upper School faculty in the pursuit of numerous initiatives while also respecting the wellness of our employees and students. These initiatives include some of the following:

- **Interdisciplinary Learning:** Building on the strengths of an outstanding faculty, WT continues its commitment to progressive education by introducing more interdisciplinary and community based learning experiences. This effort is supported by expanding our campus to include the Joan Clark Davis Center for Interdisciplinary Learning, which opened during the 2023-2024 academic year.
- **Schedule and Calendar Innovation:** Through our efforts to Rethink Time & Space, WT is engaged in a process to redesign our daily schedule and annual calendars, including moving from a trimester to semester model.
- **Social Emotional Wellness:** WT is working to enhance social-emotional, wellness and belonging, and DEI learning opportunities through advisory, seminars, and other special programs.

- **Strategic Design:** WT is in the process of launching the process to create the next strategic design . The leadership team is an essential part of that process.
- **Facilitate Growth:** Partner with senior leadership to implement a new faculty growth model that advances teaching, learning, and professional culture.
- **AI and Technology in the Classroom:** Partner with school leadership and faculty to shape a forward-looking vision for AI, technology, and the future of teaching and learning.

The Position

The Upper School, along with its 30+ faculty members, will embrace a leader who is confident, relational, and inspiring. The Director will support a positive and warm community in the Upper School that is marked by strong colleague and student relationships. Faculty members appreciate the collegial culture and seek a division director who is visible and engaged, who will encourage new initiatives and professional development while also allowing for autonomy and independence. A successful Director will take time to understand and support the WT culture and will be a responsive leader who is adept at collaborating and communicating with colleagues to support work and move initiatives forward.

The Director is responsible for the daily operations of the Upper School, working in conjunction with other Upper School administrators. They will need to demonstrate leadership with an ability to envision, develop, and implement an Upper School program that best serves the needs of the students and employees, and maintains our commitment to progressive education.



Primary Responsibilities

- Serve as an academic leader of the Upper School by:
 - Maintaining an educational program that embraces a progressive approach and aligns with WT's Philosophy of Teaching and Learning
 - Providing broad oversight and support of the Upper School program by convening and collaborating with Upper School and school-wide colleagues, including Department Chairs, to create an engaging teaching and learning experience
 - Serving as an inspirational visionary who drives academic innovation, curricular revision, and collaborative change toward strategic priorities in partnership with the faculty and Dean of Curricular Connection and Innovation
 - Ensuring the support, growth, and development of Upper School faculty through collaboration with the Assistant Head of School for Teaching and Learning in regard to onboarding, mentoring, goal-setting, and professional development
- Develop and maintain a culture that values relationships as a critical component of a school community, deepens the sense of belonging, and supports the wellness of everyone
- Advance WT's diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments by actively leading, supporting, and promoting related initiatives with support from the Upper School DEI Liaisons
- Supervise and collaborate with the Upper School Dean of Students and Upper School Counselor in regard to student life and experience
- Supervise and guide the Director and Associate Director of College Counseling in the maintenance of a four-year college counseling program
- Collaborate with the Director of Upper School Admissions to recruit, admit, and retain Upper School students, and support the work of the Advancement Office in engaging alumni and parents
- Support the Director of Athletics with work related to the Upper School athletics program
- Foster meaningful relationships with parents, caregivers, and families through engagement and regular communication
- Develop and oversee the annual Upper School budget in partnership with the Business Office
- Serve on the Academic Administrator Team and collaborate with other academic administrators, including Lower and Middle School Directors; Dean of Curricular Connection and Innovation; Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging; Director of Support Services; Upper School Counselor Gay J. Neals Chair for City as Our Campus; and Assistant Head of School for Teaching and Learning. Also serves on the Head's Council and collaborates with its members as needed

Leadership Qualities

The successful candidate will demonstrate the following in order to be an effective leader of our Upper School:

- Extensive experience teaching as well as academic program leadership with an advanced degree in education or a related field
- Significant knowledge of and expertise in high school curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices
- Demonstrated commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and student success
- Commitment to inspiring and sustaining a culture of excellence with a leadership style that is collaborative, relational, and motivating
- Relevant experience in leading and supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives
- Demonstrated success leading curricular, pedagogical, and programmatic change as a strategic thinker, effective communicator, and pragmatic project manager
- Understanding of the importance of interdisciplinary and community-based learning, including equally valuing the arts, humanities, and STEM-related disciplines
- Ability to analyze and develop systems and processes
- Enthusiasm and experience related to hiring, supervising, evaluating, and supporting a large, talented faculty and other colleagues in a respectful and collegial manner
- An evident focus on wellness and community-building as essential elements of a school
- Demonstrated strong communication skills as a speaker, writer, and listener with the ability to approach difficult conversations with directness and kindness while sharing openly about decision-making processes

Supporting Your Transition

All new administrators at WT receive support as they transition into the school community. The Director of Upper School will be paired with an internal mentor who guides them through the onboarding process. They also have the option to be paired with an external mentor serving in a similar position at another school to provide additional, objective perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing them. The Director will be supported by a transition team of colleagues, parents, and students who can help them navigate learning the community and networking with important stakeholders. Our professional development opportunities are abundant and personalized to the needs of the individual. Finally, the Director of Upper School will work closely with, and be supported by, the Assistant Head of School for Teaching and Learning and other members of the academic administration team.

Welcome to Pittsburgh, PA!



Pittsburgh is nestled in the picturesque intersection of three major waterways and rolling hills, and has played an important role in our country's industrial history. Throughout the years, Pittsburgh has moved from the steel industry to become a leader in healthcare, education, technology, and financial services with a rich and robust arts and food culture. Pittsburgh has been transformed to a modern, vibrant city.

The City of Pittsburgh offers everything a person might be looking for in a home. Pittsburgh is known for having more named neighborhoods than any American city. Ninety distinct urban and suburban communities collectively create the culture of Pittsburgh. Winchester Thurston's home neighborhood of Shadyside is located approximately five miles east of the city center and in the heart of one of Pittsburgh's most lively educational, cultural, medical, and research centers. Shadyside is a highly walkable area known for its historic homes, hip boutiques, and lively restaurant scene. Its close proximity to universities, museums, and large city parks offers a variety of cultural and recreational activities, such as Carnegie Museum of Art and Natural History and Frick Park. Nearby are other great neighborhoods that are excellent places to live and visit. Oakland and Squirrel Hill are home to University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, and Chatham University. The Strip District is a wonderful market spot known for its variety of food and unique stores. If you're looking for more of a creative and artistic side of Pittsburgh, pass through the trendy neighborhood of Lawrenceville. East Liberty is a growing neighborhood with new development and the home of businesses such as Duolingo and Google. South Side has a fun and exciting nightlife full of clubs, sports bars, and laid-back pubs. North Shore is where you can catch a Steelers' game, kayak the rivers, or visit the Warhol Museum. Finally, Downtown, like most downtown districts, has great food, theaters, and events.

Nicknamed "Kidsburgh," and the former home of Mister Rogers, Pittsburgh is often recognized as one of the country's best places to raise a child. Our affordable city is a fun and comfortable place to call home. Numerous attractions are here for family fun, such as the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Zoo, Kennywood Amusement Park, Carnegie Science Center, and over 20 local public libraries. There are plenty of activities to maintain a healthy lifestyle through local parks and playgrounds and farmers' markets in every neighborhood.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is the sixth largest populated state in the United States. Pittsburgh is the second largest city in Pennsylvania and has an estimated 310,000 people. The population's average age is 33. Pittsburgh serves as the County Seat of Allegheny County, which has an estimated population of 1.2 million. Pittsburgh's metropolitan area with its eight surrounding suburban counties has an estimated population of 2.6 million.

For Consideration

All inquiries are confidential, and a review of candidate files will begin immediately. You may view the job posting, complete an application, and upload your resume, letter of interest, and references at: [**Director of Upper School**](#).



Winchester Thurston School is an equal opportunity employer. WT is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and pluralistic community and strongly encourages applications from people of color, LGBTQ candidates, and women