LICK-WILMERDING
HIGH SCHOOL

OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT *for the*

# LWHS DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

## SUMMARY

**LOCATION**: San Francisco, CA

**POST DATE**: Oct. 26, 2026

**PRIORITY APPLICATION DEADLINE**: Dec. 4, 2026

**SEMI FINAL ROUND**: week of Jan. 25, 2027

**FINAL ROUND**: week of Feb. 8, 2027

**DECISION ANNOUNCED**: Feb. 26, 2027

**START DATE**: July 1, 2027

**REPORTS TO**: Head of School

**SALARY RANGE**: $160,000-$190,000

# LWHS Overview

## MISSION

A private school with public purpose, Lick-Wilmerding High School develops the head, heart, and hands of highly motivated students from all walks of life, inspiring them to become lifelong learners who contribute to the world with confidence and compassion.

LWHS serves 560 students in grades 9-12 in San Francisco. Since its founding in 1895 as a vocational school, Lick-Wilmerding has built upon a long tradition of valuing and integrating the liberal arts, sciences, technical arts, visual arts and performing arts to offer a robust college-prep curriculum. LWHS has a rich and distinctive academic program, with thriving departments, vibrant student life, and signature initiatives like the Center for Civic Engagement and the Public Purpose Program. Faculty and students are passionate, engaged, and driven by values that reach far beyond the classroom.

## VALUES

We are a diverse, inclusive and intentional community that values...

- keeping **BELONGING** at our core, by centering care, kindness and compassion and recognizing our essential interconnectedness.
- elevating the pursuit of **EXCELLENCE**, by striving to "do common things uncommonly well" in the spirit or inquiry, exploration, discovery and growth.
- upholding a commitment to **CRAFT**, by encouraging all members of the community to iterate, improve, and think creatively in order to hone their skills.
- cultivating **OPTIMISM**, by believing in our collective capacity to build a more just world through service, engagement with our communities and an orientation towards hope.

# About the Role

The **Director of Athletics** is a pivotal and highly visible role at Lick-Wilmerding High School and reports directly to the Head of School. After forty years of leadership, the current director of athletics, Eliot Smith, will retire at the end of 2026-27 school year. This marks the department's first leadership transition in four decades, and Eliot leaves behind a program that is deeply valued for its accessibility, inclusiveness, and contribution to student belonging. At LWHS, the athletic program cultivates an environment where students feel comfortable trying sports they've never played before, find community on their teams, and grow into meaningful contributors. The current director of athletics has built longterm relationships with students, coaches, families, alumni, and external partners which have shaped the character of LWHS athletics. The incoming director will inherit a strong foundation and a community deeply invested in its success, with an exciting opportunity to define the program's next chapter.

The Director of Athletics will be responsible for developing and implementing a clear, mission-aligned vision for the athletic program. The director will oversee the department's day-to-day operations, with the support of two associate athletic directors and a sports performance support specialist. Currently, the Athletics program at LWHS is comprised of 21 programs representing 14 different sports at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Frosh/Soph levels. More than 75% of the student body participates in athletics each year. The current director stewards the school's essential partnership with our neighbor, City College of San Francisco, which provides fields and facilities in an urban setting where space is an incredibly important resource. The next director will provide steady, consistent leadership for the department and invest in the growth and development of its existing staff.

Stakeholders across campus see clear opportunities ahead: strengthening coaching recruitment and development, continuing to build consistent systems and communication, ensuring equitable support and recognition across all sports and genders, and integrating athletics more fully into the life of the school. The ideal candidate will not be the person who promises the most wins, nor someone who simply maintains the status quo, but a visionary leader who takes the time to understand the program, honors its history, and makes meaningful change in a way that brings students, coaches, families, and the broader community along. The director of athletics will serve as a member of the senior leadership team, and report to the head of school. The start date for this position is July 1, 2027.

## ATHLETICS AT LWHS

At LWHS, athletics is built on the qualities that last well beyond high school, as students are encouraged to develop their head, heart, and hands in every part of their experience. Two ideas guide the program. The first, "**put your foot in the circle**," reflects the belief that every student should have the courage to try, which is why there are no cuts at the frosh and soph level. The second, "**champions find a way**," asks student-athletes to focus on what makes success possible rather than on obstacles. Underlying both is a simple belief: if every student-athlete improves each year and every team gets better, the results will follow. Here, belonging and competitive excellence flourish together.

The Athletics Department nurtures the skills, character, and inclusivity of student-athletes from all walks of life, building confidence and compassion through athletic competition. We value a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture for all of our student-athletes. The next Director of Athletics will be the steward of this philosophy, carrying it forward with every coach, family, and student-athlete. LWHS teams compete in the Bay Area Conference (BAC), one of the most competitive small independent school leagues in California; the BAC comprises four distinct leagues, and LWHS competes in the BCL-West.

Today, the LWHS Athletics program is strong: our students achieve at high levels individually, our teams compete for and win championships, and student participation continues to climb.

# Areas of Focus

## Culture, Vision, and the Student-Athlete Experience

The Director of Athletics will serve as the steward of a program built on participation, belonging, and the development of the whole student. Working closely with the Head of School, the Director will articulate and pursue a clear vision of athletic excellence at LWHS, one that raises the quality of the experience for every student-athlete while creating pathways to greater competitive success as students and programs develop. This includes ensuring consistent support, resources, and recognition across all sports and genders and leading a thoughtful review of the program's offerings to ensure each is sustainable and well supported.

## Coaching Leadership and Development

A core responsibility of the director will be recruiting, developing, supervising, and retaining an outstanding coaching staff, recognizing that the student experience depends heavily on the coach. The director will build a clear framework for coach onboarding, professional development, and evaluation, helping coaches understand the school's values, student development, and expectations, while preserving the autonomy that allows strong coaches to thrive. The director will also support the many coaches who balance coaching with teaching and other roles on campus.

## Operations, Partnerships, and Institutional Integration

The director will oversee the department's day-to-day operations, with the support of the two associate athletic directors and the sports performance support specialist. This includes scheduling, facilities, transportation, equipment, budget, and communication, building documented systems that take logistical burdens off coaches and students. The director will manage the school's partnership with City College of San Francisco and relationships with the Bay Area Conference, officials, and other external partners. As a visible institutional leader, the director will collaborate with faculty, student life, admissions, advancement, and alumni relations so that athletics is understood as an integral part of the school's educational mission and a source of school spirit and connection.

# Duties

- Lead, supervise, and develop the athletics department staff, fostering a collaborative, well-organized team.
- Recruit, hire, onboard, and evaluate coaches across all programs and levels, ensuring each is trained, supported, and given regular feedback.
- Lead seasonal coaches' meetings to review expectations, school policies, and rules of play.
- In collaboration with associate athletic directors, oversee scheduling for all interscholastic contests, including officials, transportation, facilities, visiting teams, and game-day operations.
- Manage the athletics budget and allocate resources equitably across sports and genders.
- Serve as the primary liaison to City College of San Francisco for fields and facilities, and to the Bay Area Conference and BCL-West.
- Serve as the point person for the school's partnership with UCSF in support of the athletic training program.
- Collaborate with College Counseling to support student-athletes pursuing college athletics.
- Coordinate with the Business Office, Communications, Facilities, Admissions, Advancement, and other departments to ensure the smooth cross-functional operation of the athletics program.
- Partner with the Parenting Association Sports Boosters to engage families and support the athletics program.
- Annually review and update athletics policies in the Coaches' Handbook, and the relevant sections of the Faculty and Employee Handbooks.
- Serve as a member of the senior leadership team and perform other duties as assigned.

# Qualifications

### Education and Certifications

- Bachelor's degree required
- Valid California driver's license and clean driving record required
- Current CPR and First Aid certification, or willingness to obtain before the season begins
- NFHS coaching certification highly preferred

## *Qualifications, continued*

### Experience and Expertise

- 7–10 years of progressively responsible leadership experience in athletics administration, high school, higher education, or a similar organization
- Demonstrated success in coaching, coaching development, hiring, and performance management
- Demonstrated success leading large, multifaceted organizations through periods of growth, change, and strategic evolution
- Experience managing complex budgets, personnel, and organizational resources
- The ability to build and maintain clear operational systems and policies across a large, multi-season program with competing demands on time and space
- Strong understanding of school culture and the role athletics plays in advancing institutional mission, enrollment, student experience, and community engagement
- Knowledge of current trends affecting school athletics, including student-athlete wellness, club sports, specialization, college recruitment, and changing parent expectations
- Proficiency with Mac, iPad, and Google Workspace, and a learner's mindset when it comes to adopting new technology and programs

### Personal and Leadership Qualities

- A genuine passion for coaching and student-athlete development
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, an understanding of diverse cultures and experiences, and an awareness of implicit bias
- An ability to create and maintain positive, supportive, and trusting relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives
- Exceptional communication and relationship-building skills, including the ability to work with stakeholders and contribute positively to organizational morale
- A detail-oriented, organized, and analytical approach to managing schedules and logistics, with a genuine interest in improving how the department runs
- A willingness to participate fully in the life of the school, with the understanding that the role regularly requires evening and weekend availability for games, events, and other athletic and community activities

# Key Statistics

**Founded in**

**1895**

**Average Class Size**

**16**

**Campus Spaces include:**

- **Technical Arts “Shops”**
- **Cafeteria**
- **full-court gymnasium with climbing wall**
- **music studio**
- **dance studio**
- **photography studio with darkroom**
- **7,100 square foot library**

**560** total students

**73%** students of color

**75%** of students participate in a sport

**57%** of students participate in performing arts

**DIVERSITY at LWHS**

Of our 560 students:

**7-14%** of each class are first generation-to-college students

**11%** are Black or African-American

**17%** are Latinx

**46%** are Asian, including East and South Asian

**58%** are white

**41%** identify as multi-racial

**LWHS TEACHERS**

**82** full and part time faculty members

with an average of **20+** years teaching experience

**42** teachers hold Master’s degrees

**7** teachers hold Doctoral degrees

Multi-year investment and partnership with neighboring City College of San Francisco for use of athletic fields and facilities.

**Annual financial aid allotment:**

**~$8M**

# LWHS History

## 1874

James Lick establishes a trust of $540,000 to endow the California School of Mechanical Arts, commonly referred to as “Lick.”.

## 1894

Jellis Clute Wilmerding leaves $400,000 to the Regents of the University of California to establish and administer another school, the Wilmerding School of Industrial Arts, a school for boys specializing in building trades and architecture drafting.

## 1912

George Merrill opens the Lux School for Industrial Training for Girls, using space from the Lick facilities, with a curriculum focused on sewing and textiles, food, health, art, and retailing and merchandising.

## 1913

Lux opens its own building the following year, on land purchased from the Lick and Wilmerding Schools. The original Lux building still stands today at the corner of 17th and Potrero Streets in San Francisco.

## 1952

Lux closes, but its early contribution to women’s education becomes a national model and stands as a significant accomplishment

## 1955

Lick and Wilmerding merge to form Lick-Wilmerding High School, and moves to its current campus on Ocean Avenue. It becomes a boys-only school, and begins to develop its outstanding college-preparatory curriculum.

## 1972

Lick-Wilmerding becomes co-educational once again and, shortly thereafter, begins charging tuition for the first time in its history.

## 1986

Two Lick-Wilmerding faculty co-found Aim High, a summer school program for public middle school students that would later grow to more than twenty campuses.

## 2018

Lick-Wilmerding finishes renovating its main building, the third of three major construction projects since 1997 (first two: library and shops).

## 2024

Lick-Wilmerding completes Bothin Gymnasium improvements, including replacing the gym floor and playing surface, and installing new bleachers that accommodate the entire student body.

# Connecting to LWHS

## LWHS IN THE CITY

The campus at 755 Ocean Avenue is...

- 2 miles to Stonestown Galleria
- 5 miles to Twin Peaks
- 5 miles to Golden Gate Park
- 5 miles to Ocean Beach
- 8 miles to Golden Gate Bridge

LWHS is nestled in the Ingleside neighborhood, across the street from City College of SF and on the border of the Excelsior. This welcoming and vibrant neighborhood in the southern part of the city is known for its residential feel and sense of community.

The neighborhood is home to a variety of local cafes, shops, and restaurants along Ocean Avenue, giving plenty of options for coffee breaks, lunch spots, or after-school gatherings.

There are numerous ways to get to LWHS including the bus, streetcar, and BART:

- Balboa Park BART Station
- MUNI buses: 8X, 8BX, 29, 43, 49, and 54
- MUNI streetcars: J, KT, and M. all stop within a block of the school on Ocean or Geneva Avenues

Additionally, many faculty and staff create carpools with colleagues who live nearby.

## FIND LWHS ONLINE

lickwilmerding

lick.wilmerding

lick-wilmerdinghighschool4235

lickwilmerding

**lwhs.org**

# How to Apply

**Priority Application Deadline: December 4, 2026.**
**All applications must be submitted online: Apply here.**

## To apply, please submit all of the following:

- A cover letter introducing yourself to the LWHS Director of Athletics Search Committee
- Your CV or resume
- A list of four references. Include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you. We will not contact any references without first obtaining your permission.
- A response to the following prompt: *In 250 words or less, please share your coaching philosophy and your approach to building an inclusive and motivating athletics program.*