

THE Calhoun SCHOOL

Associate Head of School for Teaching and Learning

The Calhoun School seeks a creative, experienced, and forward-thinking leader to develop and implement effective strategies consistent with Calhoun's mission as a joyous, student-centered, inquiry-driven and values-based educational institution. This new and exciting position of Associate Head of School for Teaching and Learning will report to the Head of School. The Associate Head of School for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for driving innovation and leading collaborative change in the academic and pedagogical spheres across all three divisions of the school. The Associate Head will provide leadership for teams of faculty and administrators to implement a vision for Calhoun embodied within a new Strategic Plan to be approved by the end of 2018.

Recognized nationally as a leader in progressive education, Calhoun is a thoughtful, caring, compassionate and intellectual community where students feel comfortable to express themselves and be their authentic selves. The teacher-student relationship goes beyond everyday learning to a genuine partnership and appreciation for one another. Calhoun is an intimate and informal environment where teachers and students call each other by their first names. The school's administration and faculty put students first. Located on Manhattan's Upper West Side, Calhoun benefits from being in a richly diverse environment in the heart of the artistic, financial and media capital of the world.

MISSION STATEMENT

Calhoun inspires a passion for learning through a progressive approach to education that values intellectual pursuit, creativity, diversity and community involvement.

ABOUT THE CALHOUN SCHOOL

The Calhoun School is a coeducational, independent, preK-12 day school on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Serving approximately 700 students in two classroom buildings (on 81st St. and West End Ave., and on 74th St. between Amsterdam and Columbus Aves.), Calhoun is dedicated to nurturing a joy of learning through inquiry-based, cross-disciplinary, student-centered instruction in its distinctive open classrooms. Calhoun's commitment to diversity, community engagement and social justice permeates its curricular and co-curricular offerings from the earliest ages. Calhoun maintains a low average class size of twelve to fifteen students. There are 95 full-time

dedicated faculty members allowing for a low 7:1 student-to-faculty ratio. There are also twelve associate teachers in the lower school as well as six to eight part-time faculty, primarily in the music department.

CALHOUN'S PROGRESSIVE APPROACH

Teachers have autonomy in the classroom that encourages innovation and allows them to find the path that works best for their students. The open classroom setting invites collaboration among disciplines and colleagues while fostering community. Teachers take a constructivist approach to helping their students learn from their own experiences. At Calhoun, small class sizes allow teachers to know their students and maximize learning for each student.

Calhoun's progressive approach to learning invests in the intellectual, emotional, and social growth of its students as members of a larger society. Teaching and learning begin with the needs, interests, questions, and diverse life experiences of the individual. Students construct an understanding of themselves and the world by engaging in purposeful and meaningful work in each of their classes as well as through service learning opportunities, field trips and independent projects. They develop a sense of empathy, equity, and justice and embrace their accountability to their community and the rest of the world.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Steven Solnick joined Calhoun as the Head of School on July 1, 2017. Steve is only the 11th Head of School since Calhoun was founded in 1896.

Steve arrived at Calhoun with a unique and diverse background in leadership and education. Most recently, he was president of Warren Wilson College in Asheville, NC. During his five-year tenure, he raised the college's national profile, headed a strategic planning initiative focused on academic excellence, and successfully completed a major capital campaign.

From 2002 to 2012 he served as the Ford Foundation Representative in Moscow and New Delhi, where he directed programs in social justice, education, the environment, and the arts. Prior to that, Steve was a professor of political science at Columbia University, where he wrote and taught about post-Soviet Russia.

Steve is supported by an experienced and committed senior leadership team that includes Division Directors for Upper, Middle and Lower Schools as well as Directors of Development, Enrollment, Finance, Facilities/Operations, College Counseling, and Diversity and Equity Initiatives.

LOWER SCHOOL (YOUNG 3's - 5th GRADE)

Characteristics of the Lower School include project-centered, play-focused learning, and individualized attention. To promote a strong relationship between the child and his/her teacher, each child is a member of a small group called a cluster. Clusters are made up of 10-15 children,

with one head teacher and one assistant or shared assistant. In some early childhood classrooms, two clusters share one room. In 3rd-5th grade, the cluster of 10-15 students moves to different subject areas as a group and begins and ends the day with the cluster advisor, who is the main contact person and overseer for each child in his/her cluster.

Calhoun is an intellectually stimulating environment because of the wide diversity of children and adults in their classrooms. Teachers bring their own passions and expertise to their classes, and in a warm, joyful environment, children and adults work closely with each other, sharing excitement for whatever they are learning together. Young children need flexibility, safety and routine, and Calhoun's Lower School teachers create the nurturing space that allows children to be actively engaged in the learning process.

In Calhoun's Lower School, children have the freedom to grow at a developmentally appropriate pace into their own unique characters. In doing so, Calhoun students develop strong skills, social confidence, intelligence, motivation, and a positive attitude about school and their own education.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (6th - 8th GRADES)

The Middle School thrives with Calhoun's joyful spirit. Students are again put first and are at the center of the school. The interdisciplinary curriculum engages pre-adolescent and adolescent students in an examination of this connection between the self and society. In seventh grade, for example, the study of geographical and cultural history and the study of DNA are made more meaningful by rich co-curricular connections. Eighth graders culminate their study of Mandarin and Spanish by excursions abroad—to China, Peru, Cuba or Spain. Course work is multicultural, project-oriented, and designed to stretch students' thinking from the concrete to the abstract.

The Calhoun School attends to the developmental needs specific to each student by addressing and supporting the need for good organization, routine study skills, responsibility for one's work and mature social behavior. Every student has a strong relationship with a faculty advisor, to discuss topics as diverse as course work, study habits and relevant social issues.

While building upon the solid foundation of the Lower School, Calhoun's Middle School continues to engage and ignite curiosity. Students are guided toward independence as they develop their own distinct voices, taking ownership of who they are as individual thinkers while celebrating the diversity within the Calhoun community.

Students' interests guide each teachers' unique approach to content development, which is infused with interdisciplinary studies, current events, and project-based learning. Teachers are also encouraged to let their own passions play a part in their planning, making the Middle School at Calhoun an exciting place to learn and grow.

UPPER SCHOOL (9th - 12th GRADES)

Calhoun's Upper School is a welcoming community where students are firmly at the center of their education, experiencing the world in a variety of authentic ways. Students are highly engaged learners who participate eagerly in their education, and whose voices are heard and respected.

The Upper School offers more than 130 courses. Upper School students complete required courses in English, math, science, social studies, world languages, the arts and physical education. Beyond those courses they can choose from a wide range of advanced electives that more closely resemble what you would see in a college catalog than on a high school course list. A sampling of these offerings include: Experimental Probability and Statistics; Bioethics; Documentary Storytelling; Advanced Music Theory; and Punishment, Politics and Culture. Students' learning is further enhanced by an innovative schedule (a 5-MOD System and a 6-day rotation, with a Daily Block System).

Other highlights of the Upper School include the Junior Workshop: a seven-week independent project in which eleventh graders are challenged to create something new or innovative; and the Senior Work: a closely-monitored, six-week internship for twelfth graders in the professional environment of their choice.

The 55 graduates of Calhoun's Class of 2017 matriculated at some of the finest colleges and universities, as listed [here](#). Of those 55 students, 37 applied Early Decision or Restricted Early Action, and 28 were successful. Therefore, 75 percent of Calhoun's class knew by December that they were going to their first-choice school. That class matriculated to 41 distinct institutions.

CROSS DIVISIONAL PROGRAMS

Calhoun has a number of strong co-curricular programs that stretch across divisions. There is strong music and theater programming across all-three divisions; the jazz program that is among the strongest in the city. The school has middle school, junior varsity and varsity teams competing in volleyball, soccer, basketball, cross-country, track, baseball and softball. A health and life-skills program also tracks through all divisions, with peer-led instruction becoming a major component of the Upper School approach.

ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Associate Head of School for Teaching and Learning will report to the Head of School. S/he will be expected to have significant experience in educational leadership and should hold strong educational credentials with an advanced degree in a relevant field.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As The Calhoun School continues to grow and evolve, the new Associate Head will have the opportunity to address the following priorities within the school:

- **Collaborating closely with the Head of School to support Calhoun’s mission and promote excellence in teaching and learning consistent with an outstanding progressive school.** The new Associate Head will champion the pedagogical innovation that advances Calhoun’s commitment to experiential, inquiry-based, project-centered learning. S/he will strengthen and implement student assessment systems that are consistent with Calhoun’s commitment to progressive education and inquiry-based learning.
- **Continuing to support the development and success of faculty at all stages of their careers.** The new Associate Head will oversee the professional development for faculty and manage the professional development budgets. S/he will review, strengthen and (in collaboration with the Director of Human Resources and Division Directors) implement a constructive and collaborative approach to faculty hiring and assessment. S/he will support institutional assessment efforts related to teaching and learning, to ensure achievement of Strategic Plan outcomes.
- **Assessing Calhoun’s current academic programs and developing new ones to address the changing needs of the students.** The Associate Head will oversee curriculum development and coordination across divisions. S/he will oversee and strengthen learning support programs and resources at all levels and develop and support a coherent and mission-consistent approach to the instructional use of technology. The Associate Head will support the ongoing assessment of and improvements to the school schedule.
- **Serving as a passionate advocate, both internally and externally, for all three Divisions within the School.** S/he will facilitate and support the coordination of co-curricular and extracurricular activities as part of a holistic educational experience. The new Associate Head will lead other special projects that advance teaching and learning at the School, as directed by the Head of School, and will serve as the Acting Head of School in the Head’s absence. The new Associate Head will partner with parents, alumni and other constituent groups in the educational enterprise.
- **Maintaining and strengthening even further Calhoun’s wonderfully diverse, inclusive, positive, and supportive climate.** The new Associate Head will promote diversity and social justice across the curriculum in all divisions and develop new models for engaging with the surrounding community as an integral part of the school’s educational model.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Given the Calhoun School's distinctive focus and mission, the Associate Head must possess an appreciation for inquiry-based student-centered learning, a willingness to collaborate, and a positive outlook. S/he must have a genuine passion for working with children and supporting a mission of providing educational opportunities that treat each student as an individual. In addition to being an imaginative and collegial leader, strong candidates will also bring many of the following qualities, skills, and experiences to the role:

- At least 8 years of teaching experience, preferably at different age levels, and at least 5 years of administrative experience, preferably in independent schools;
- An advanced degree in a relevant field;
- A successful track record of curriculum planning and student assessment;
- Experience hiring, evaluating, and mentoring faculty;
- A thorough grasp of the latest research on learning and the brain, and some experience applying this research in school settings;
- The ability to thrive in a collaborative environment and enjoy working with teams rather than rigid hierarchies;
- The ability to appreciate the opportunities and challenges of living and working at an independent school in Manhattan;
- Intellectual nimbleness, resourcefulness, entrepreneurship, and adaptability; and
- Strong communication skills and a good sense of humor.

CONTACT

For best consideration, nominations, applications, and queries should be sent in confidence to:

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The Calhoun School is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all employees and qualified applicants without regard to gender, race, color, religion, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or marital status.