

CHARLES WRIGHT ACADEMY

Upper School Director

Grades 9-12

Tacoma, Washington

Start date July 1, 2025

Charles Wright Academy (CWA), a diverse K-12 community of 550 students on 107 acres in Tacoma, Washington, is seeking an Upper School Director (US Director). This position is responsible for the full grade 9-12 experience, ultimately supporting nearly approximately 150 students and 30 faculty and staff. The US Director serves as a member of the school's Senior Leadership Teams, reporting directly to the Head of School, and supervising upper school faculty, department chairs, counseling staff, learning support specialist, and the Director of Student Life. Salary and benefits are competitive.



CHARLES WRIGHT
ACADEMY
CHARLESWRIGHT.ORG



OVERVIEW & GUIDING DOCUMENTS

CWA nurtures and challenges students to develop the character, creativity, and skills to successfully navigate the future with confidence. The school embraces an intentional culture that champions everyone's full participation as their authentic selves in all of the opportunities that comprise the Charles Wright experience. This includes supporting each community member's understanding of their own identities and acceptance of the identities of others. By doing so, CWA empowers everyone at school to connect, learn, grow, and achieve.

MISSION

To inspire active, joyful learning while nurturing and challenging our students to develop the character, creativity, and skills to successfully navigate the future with confidence.

VALUES

Excellence | Compassion | Integrity
Respect | Perseverance

INCLUSION STATEMENT

Charles Wright Academy best exemplifies its mission and values when everyone knows they belong in our school community.

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BY THE NUMBERS

- **Founded in 1957**
- **107-acre campus, including 40 acres of forested trails**
- **Average class size: 12**
- **Student-to-teacher ratio: 6:1**
- **67% of faculty hold advanced degrees**
- **Competitive athletics are offered in Lower, Middle, and Upper School**
- **\$3M in private school financial aid awarded to 37% of students**
- **\$40M endowment**
- **25+ clubs, alliance, & affinity groups in Middle & Upper School**
- **14 Advanced Placement courses**
- **CWA Values: Excellence, Compassion, Integrity, Respect, Perseverance**
- **Bus service to over 70 zip codes**
- **46% of students self-report as people of color, plus 4% are international students**
- **3 Full-time Learning Specialists across divisions**
- **50+ years of Experiential Learning: outdoor ed, travel, internships, service learning, and more.**

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

CWA students and alumni represent a broad range of academic, artistic, and athletic aptitudes and abilities. The common attributes they share are a motivation to learn, desire to work hard and persist in the face of challenges, willingness to cooperate and engage fully in the life of the community, and a generally trusting and respectful attitude toward teachers and classmates.

Since the first class convened in 1957, Tarriers have been encouraged to solve problems, to think deeply, to collaborate respectfully, to be stewards of their communities, and to find joy in the pursuit of their passions. Charles Wright Academy strives to develop in each student the key attributes from our Portrait of a Tarrier. The next Director of Upper School will continue to center these attributes as a foundation not only for students, but also for faculty, grounding all Upper School learners and leaders in these characteristics and expectations.

Thinker

- + Asks great questions
- + Evaluates evidence critically
- + Considers multiple perspectives
- + Draws conclusions rooted in evidence and sound logic
- + Reconsiders their thinking in light of new information
- + Moves between and connects disciplines

Communicator

- + Communicates in many different forms
- + Practices effective listening
- + Expresses ideas clearly
- + Taps into their unique voice and perspective
- + Communicates effectively for varied purposes and audiences

Innovator

- + Identifies needs and opportunities
- + Applies existing tools in new ways
- + Builds on existing ideas
- + Develops original work
- + Solves problems creatively
- + Turns a vision into reality

Explorer

- + Gets curious about new challenges and opportunities
- + Translates curiosity into self-directed action
- + Takes appropriate risks
- + Seeks to understand others' experiences
- + Shifts cultural perspectives as appropriate
- + Learns from failure

Collaborator

- + Works effectively with others to achieve goals
- + Knows how to lead, how to share leadership, and how to follow
- + Builds on the ideas of others
- + Engages in healthy conflict
- + Understands their impact on others
- + Builds strong connections with others

Steward

- + Takes responsibility for their impact on the world around them
- + Works to make their communities better places
- + Takes action for the welfare of others
- + Cares for their own health, energy, and well-being
- + Driven by a vision for change



THE UPPER SCHOOL

The Upper School at Charles Wright Academy is a welcoming and vibrant community that is big enough to offer the full high school experience, yet small enough for students to be involved in anything and everything they'd like. Students join a diverse community of friends and faculty who will challenge and support them to develop as scholars, athletes, artists, and leaders.

The Upper School provides a strong academic program while simultaneously meeting the social and emotional needs of the whole child. The school offers 14 Advanced Placement classes and has earned the designation of a Platinum AP Honor Roll School. As well, the Upper School offers innovative programming in experiential outdoor education, fine and performing arts, athletics, and community activities. Specific key aspects of the US program include:

ACADEMICS

Humanities Capstone:

This is an advanced research course in which students become experts in a field of their choosing and produce new scholarly knowledge in the humanities.

Research Methodologies in English:

Students practice advanced research methods in English and the humanities by embarking on a semester-long research project of their own design.

Science Research:

Utilizing up-to-date tools and technologies in the Weyerhaeuser Research Room, students propose, design, test, and present independent research projects.

ATHLETICS, ACTIVITIES, AND STUDENT LIFE

Advisory: Community, Discovery, Connection:

Upper School advisories allow students the chance to deepen connections with their peers while exploring their unique path to graduation.

Athletics:

The significance of competitive athletics and fitness activities are essential components of a student's education, offering valuable learning opportunities.

The Arts:

We offer a breadth of opportunities taught by faculty who are also teaching artists so that students may discover and develop their unique talents - inspiring creativity, persistence, and confidence.

Student Government:

Leadership opportunities present themselves in a variety of ways and are an integrated part of the Charles Wright Upper School experience.

Activities and Competition Teams:

Robotics, Model UN, and Knowledge Bowl

Clubs and Affinity and Alliance Groups:

Clubs are student-driven, student-run, and reflect the current interests and passions of our Upper School community. Affinity and Alliance Groups: All students have opportunities to join discussion groups that help support, educate, and empower others.

POSITION SUMMARY: ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

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The Upper School Director will:

- Lead the Upper School with a strategic focus on the continuous improvement of program and student experience
- Provide supervision and guidance to Upper School faculty and staff
- Serve on the school's Senior Leadership Team
- Lead the performance feedback process for Upper School faculty and staff in collaboration with Department chairs
- Partner with the Enrollment Management team to achieve and maintain full enrollment
- Create a culture of learning, innovation, growth, accountability and professionalism for all educators in the division
- Manage hiring processes for all new Upper School faculty in collaboration with department chairs, the Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Human Resources, and the Head of School
- Develop and oversee the Upper School calendar and schedules
- Manage Upper School department chairs and attend department chair meetings
- Oversee the Upper School Experiential Education including Winterim program
- Work collaboratively with the Family Association and Upper School liaisons
- Oversee and publish weekly Upper School newsletters and division communications
- Facilitate Upper School faculty meetings
- Coordinate and plan Commencement and related events
- Manage the Upper School budget
- Actively and enthusiastically engage in the life of the school community
- Be an accessible and visible presence in all aspects of Upper School life and programs
- Build strong relationships with other administrators, faculty, students, and staff
- Foster a sense of community within the Upper School
- Engender trust and respect with all community members



POSITION SUMMARY: KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The Upper School Director will be a visionary educator with deep experience in curriculum design (both instruction and assessment), teacher evaluation and supervision, and working with a highly diverse range of students and families. This leader understands the craft and science behind rigorous, impactful teaching and inquiry, and skillfully facilitates conversations about transformative learning with faculty, students, and families. This senior administrator truly enjoys students of this age and is equally dedicated to developmentally appropriate, thoughtfully designed student programming that contributes to a culture of belonging and allows for deeper learning – such as advisory, social-emotional learning, community time, digital literacy, disciplinary structures, and student leadership opportunities.

The Upper School community, anchored by an unwavering commitment to students, is eager to welcome an inspiring leader who can build deep relationships across departments, grade levels, and divisions to support adults and students through change with clarity, purpose, and hope. Guided by research and insatiable curiosity, they are ready to dive into and embrace current needs while also anticipating future ones to ensure all students thrive. Through these methodologies, the Upper School Director will build enrollment and retention of current families.

The Upper School Director will be an agile, innovative leader adept at systems-thinking and strategic priorities including analysis of divisional schedule, assessment, and opportunities for growth and leadership. This leader will inspire the best in all constituents through cohesive vision setting, research-based and mission-driven decision making, and collaboration across celebrated differences and roles. The Upper School Director will be a talented communicator, helping all stakeholder groups understand the rationale for decisions, curricular programming, and mission alignment. They will build strong collaborative relationships with all members of the US community. With a keen eye on the school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy, the US Director will elucidate the through-lines that exist between the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools.

As the face of the Upper School, this inspiring leader will seek to engender a culture of shared leadership, building a hopeful and joyful division culture. They will approach their work with an open-mind set and passion for the interests of students. As a reflective leader, the DUS will be an astute listener and innovator, skillfully inter-weaving history, traditions and creativity into the daily life of the US and its programs and relationships.



POSITION SUMMARY: EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

In addition to the characteristics noted above, the next Director of Upper School will have:

- A love of children at every developmental stage within a grade 9-12 framework
- At least five years of professional experience within High School educational environments, including classroom teaching experience
- Significant experience with curriculum development, implementation, and assessment
- Meaningful and effective practices with faculty supervision, evaluation, and retention
- Relevant administrative experience, including supervising and coaching teachers and overseeing programs
- Experience with initiating and managing change within an educational organization
- Familiarity with developmentally appropriate and restorative disciplinary practices, including proactive practices
- Strong communication skills
- Commitment to equity and inclusion. Experience with equity and inclusion initiatives preferred,
- An advanced degree, preferably in education

This is a full-time 12-month position with a highly competitive benefits package. Salary range \$120,000-\$145,000.

It is the policy of Charles Wright Academy to maintain a school environment that is free from discrimination and to conduct its educational practices, admissions program, financial aid policies, hiring, and other school administrative programs on the basis of an individual's qualifications and abilities. Charles Wright does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability or any other classification protected by law.



APPLICATION PROCESS

Charles Wright Academy is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds to apply.

Educational Directions is assisting with this search. Please direct all inquiries, applications, and nominations in confidence to :

Dan Schwartz (he/his) at dan.schwartz@edudx.com.

Interested candidates should begin the application process as soon as possible and email the consultant with a resume before submitting other materials.

Applicants should submit the following documents and video file:

- Letter of interest explaining their experience and qualities related to the position
- Current resume detailing current and previous roles and accomplishments
- Video describing a time you entered a new school or culture; include your approach to the transition, the challenges you encountered, how you met those challenges, and what you learned (two minutes maximum)
- Representative example of a written communication (letter to families)
- List of five references, including reference name, email address, telephone number, and relationship to the candidate (Note: References will not be contacted without the prior agreement of the candidate.)

The final submission of application materials should be by Friday, February 17, 2025.

