

# Head of School

July 2027



# LAWRENCE SCHOOL



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Lawrence School, a K–12 accredited independent school in the Cleveland, Ohio area serving students with language-based learning differences, is seeking an exceptional, strategic, and mission-driven individual to serve as the next Head of School.

For more than fifty years, Lawrence has transformed the lives of students who learn differently, by building confidence, unlocking potential, and preparing graduates for success in college, career, and beyond. Lawrence is a school with deep expertise, a passionate community, and a mission that matters. A nationally renowned leader in education for students with language-based learning differences, the next Head of School will have the opportunity to shape Lawrence's next chapter alongside a deeply committed community: advancing innovation, strengthening programs, and expanding the school's impact on students and families across the region.

This is a unique opportunity to lead one of the nation's premier independent schools dedicated exclusively to serving students with learning differences.

# MISSION, VISION, & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Mission

The mission of Lawrence School is to teach students using diverse learning strategies, ignite their potential, and inspire academic, personal, and social success.

## Vision

One day all students who learn differently will have the opportunity, encouragement, and resources to fulfill their potential and benefit society.

## LAWRENCE BY THE NUMBERS

ENROLLMENT	243	Students
	73	Lower School
	66	Middle School
	104	High School
	35	BIPOC Students
39%	Need-Based Financial Aid	
FACULTY & STAFF	42	Teachers
	6 years	Average Tenure
	23	Administrators
	6:1	Student to Teacher Ratio
FINANCES	\$11.1 Million	Annual Budget
	\$1.57 Million	Endowment





## Guiding Principles

- The academic, social, and emotional needs of our students come first.
- Respect and acceptance for self and others form the foundation of our school. We aspire for all members of our community to value and celebrate the many aspects of individual identity and human diversity.
- We value excellence and honest self-assessment in everything we do.
- We believe learning is a journey in which obstacles can become opportunities for growth, and direction is more important than distance.
- We encourage students to own their academic and social strengths and challenges, and practice self-advocacy without arrogance or apology.
- We replace discouragement with hope by creating a structured, systematic, and supportive learning environment where students begin to fulfill their academic and social aspirations.
- We recognize that a clearly articulated, school-wide affective (social and emotional) curriculum is as important as academics.
- We design our programs and policies using evidence-based practices, research, and self-evaluation.
- We seek collaboration and welcome partnership to advance the field of education.
- We are committed to reframing the conversation about education: how students learn, how families are engaged, and how the global community views the acquisition of knowledge.

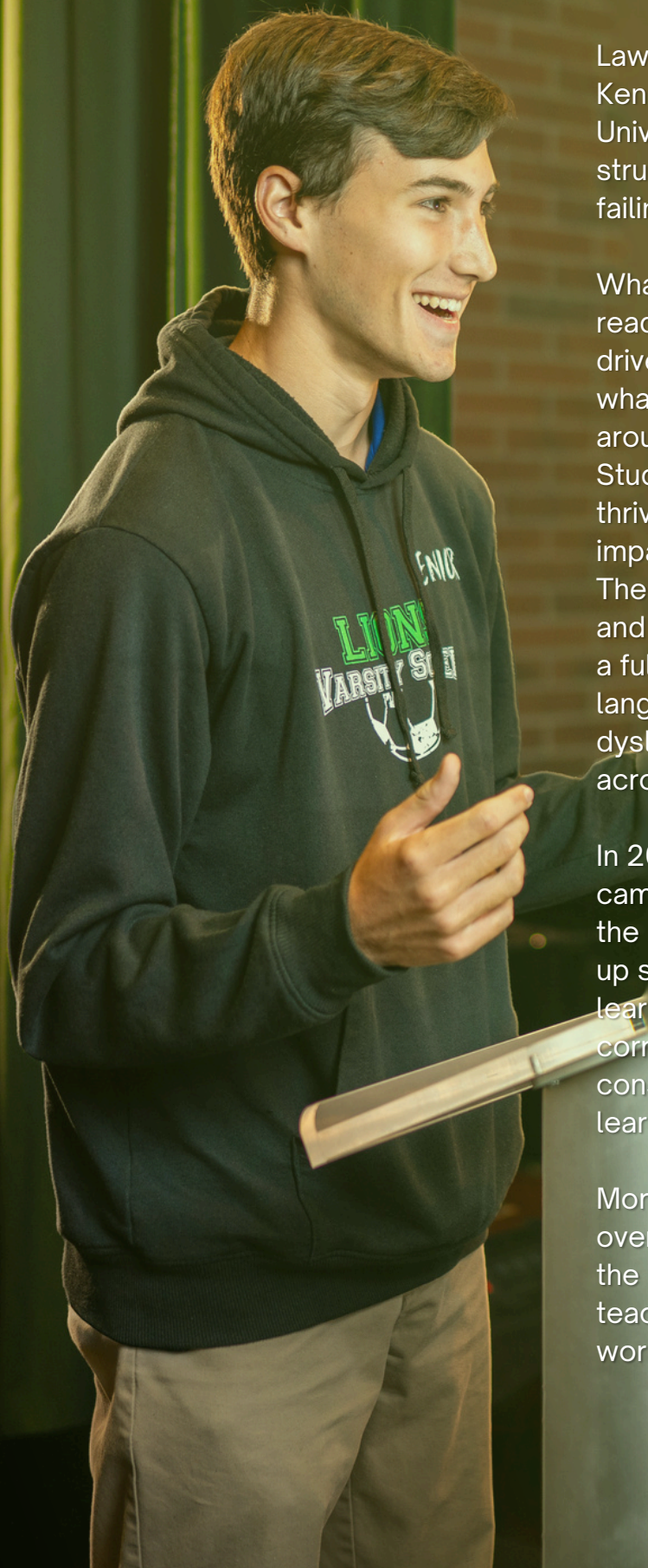
## ABOUT LAWRENCE

Lawrence School was founded in 1969 by Dr. Kenneth Oldman of Case Western Reserve University with the conviction that students who struggled in traditional classrooms weren't failing education. Education was failing them.

What began as a small, research-informed reading program grew into something far larger, driven by results and by demand. Families saw what was possible when instruction was built around how their children *actually* learned. Students who had been written off began to thrive and Lawrence kept growing based on the impact it had on children's and families' lives. The School deepened its expertise, expanded and enhanced its programs, and ultimately built a full K-12 institution serving students with language-based learning differences, including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and ADHD across Northeast Ohio.

In 2006, Lawrence opened an Upper School campus that made history as the first school in the nation designed and built from the ground up specifically for students in grades 7-12 with learning differences, with every classroom, corridor, and common space intentionally constructed to support the way these students learn best.

More than fifty years later, Lawrence serves over 250 students across two campuses, with the same mission: to see every student clearly, teach them accordingly, and send them into the world with the skills and confidence to succeed.



## PROGRAM

At Lawrence, every decision about instruction begins with the same question: what does this student need to succeed? The answer looks different for every child, and that is precisely the point. Across all grades, Lawrence blends research-based methodology with a deeply personalized approach, creating an environment where students make genuine academic progress and, just as importantly, begin to see themselves differently.





## LOWER SCHOOL

### A Campus Serving Students Through Grade 6

Many students arrive at Lawrence having already experienced frustration, confusion, or a quiet loss of confidence in traditional classrooms. The Lower School meets them where they are, with a program that is structured, affirming, and designed to close skill gaps while building a foundation that lasts.

Reading instruction is anchored in *Codebreakers*, Lawrence's proprietary Orton-Gillingham informed program, which develops decoding, fluency, and comprehension through a systematic, multisensory approach. Mathematics is taught with the same intentionality, balancing conceptual understanding with procedural fluency. With a 6:1 student-to-teacher ratio, faculty can tailor instruction to each student's pace and learning profile in ways that simply aren't possible in a traditional classroom.

Executive function skills such as organization, time management, and task initiation are woven into the program from the beginning, giving students tools that will serve them far beyond the Lower School experience. By the time students transition to the Upper School campus, they have not only strengthened core academic skills but also begun to understand themselves as learners. That shift in identity is often the most important thing Lawrence gives them.



## UPPER SCHOOL

A Campus Serving  
Students Grades 7-12

The Middle School years are a bridge from the structured skill-building of the Lower School to the growing independence of high school. Students continue to receive the individualized support that defines Lawrence, while beginning to take greater ownership of their learning. Executive function coaching, small classes, and integrated assistive technology provide continuity as academic demands increase and students develop a clearer, more confident sense of who they are as learners.

The High School offers a college preparatory program, with rigor and intention built around the reality that college readiness looks different for every student. Classes remain small, enabling discussion-based instruction, individualized feedback, and the kind of genuine faculty-student relationships that make challenging academics feel within reach.

A defining feature of the High School experience is its emphasis on self-advocacy. Students don't just learn what they need to succeed; they learn how to articulate those needs, a skill that proves critical in college and beyond. Executive function coaching remains embedded throughout, helping students meet increasing demands with confidence and independence.

The curriculum extends well beyond core coursework. Electives in visual arts, animation, forensics, language, weight training, and ecology invite students to discover new strengths and pursue genuine interests. Each year, *M-Term*, an experiential learning week, takes students entirely outside the traditional classroom, immersing them in hands-on, curriculum-connected experiences led by faculty.





## COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING

Lawrence's College and Career Center works with each student individually across all four years of high school, building a personalized pathway to life after Lawrence. The School recognizes that its graduates go on to a range of post-secondary destinations, including four-year colleges, two-year programs, gap-year experiences, and various post-High School career pathways and helps students navigate these choices. Students are prepared not just academically, but also with a clear understanding of how they learn and the self-advocacy skills to navigate new environments successfully. Alumni consistently describe Lawrence as the place that rebuilt their confidence and changed what they believed was possible for themselves.

## ATHLETICS

Lawrence fields interscholastic teams in soccer, cross country, basketball, baseball, softball, golf, cheer, and flag football across all seasons. The program is built on participation over selectivity; teams are structured so students of all skill levels can engage, grow, and contribute. 70% of Lawrence students play a sport and for many students, athletics become one of the most confidence-building experiences of their time at Lawrence, offering teamwork, a sense of belonging, and the discovery of strengths they didn't know they had.



## THE ARTS

The arts are a genuine and visible part of life at Lawrence. Students take courses in visual art, music, theater, and band as part of the school program, with dedicated instruction that treats artistic development as seriously as any other discipline. Each year, the community comes together to produce a student play, a musical, and several evenings celebrating the arts, gallery shows, and musical performances. Lawrence invites families and visitors to come together on campus to enjoy the artistic talents of the Lawrence student body.

The Upper School is also home to more than 20 student clubs organized around shared interests, giving students even more ways to explore, connect, and build community beyond the classroom.





## THE ETHAN D. SCHAFER CENTER FOR LEARNING DIFFERENCES

The Ethan D. Schafer Center for Learning Differences extends the mission of Lawrence School beyond its enrolled students, serving as a resource for families, educators, and the broader community. Through comprehensive diagnostic evaluations, the Center helps identify learning differences such as dyslexia, ADHD, and executive function challenges, providing families with a clearer understanding of how their children learn and what support they need to succeed.

In addition to its clinical work, the Schafer Center offers guidance, outreach, tutoring, and educational programming, strengthening partnerships with families and professionals throughout the region. It also reinforces Lawrence's commitment to evidence-based practice, ensuring that the school's academic program remains aligned with current research and evolving understanding in the field.

Together, this work positions Lawrence not only as a school, but as a national leader in advancing knowledge and support for students who learn differently.

# THE LAWRENCE COMMUNITY



The Lawrence community is bound by the School's Mission and a shared dedication to the students it serves. Faculty, staff, school leadership, parents and the Board of Trustees come together to form a special community that transforms the lives of Lawrence's students.

Faculty and staff are the heart of Lawrence School. They are skilled educators with deep, specialized expertise in teaching students with learning differences, and they bring professionalism and genuine care for their students to the daily learning environment. Collaboration is a hallmark of the culture: teachers work closely together to understand each student fully, share what's working, and continually refine their practice. What unites them is not just competence, but a shared belief in the potential of every student and a dedication to the mission that goes well beyond the classroom.



Families come to Lawrence having often navigated long, complicated educational paths. Many arrive with hard-won advocacy skills, a deep commitment to their children, and a cautious hope that this place might be different. It is. The relationship between the Lawrence families and the school is built on trust, transparency, and a genuine sense of partnership. Parents are engaged, personally aligned with the mission, and consistently describe their experience in terms that go beyond satisfaction. *"Lawrence gets you, and they get your child"* is the kind of thing families say. This sentiment captures something powerful: the experience of finally being seen, understood, and supported in the way their child deserves.

Finally, the Board of Trustees shares the community's passion for mission and demonstrates genuine commitment to Lawrence. The Board includes many parents of current or former students that hail from a variety of professional backgrounds that offers a diverse skill set to support the Head of School.

## PLACE

Lawrence operates across two campuses, each designed around the developmental needs of its students. The Lower School, located in Broadview Heights, serves students through sixth grade. The Upper School, located in Sagamore Hills, serves students in grades 7-12. Across both campuses, outdoor spaces and shared areas extend the learning environment and support a well-rounded student experience.



The Lower School is designed for the work that happens there: structured, consistent, and intimate. Classrooms are built for small-group, multisensory instruction, creating a close-knit environment where students build foundational skills and, just as importantly, confidence.

The Upper School campus is a genuine asset and a reflection of Lawrence's commitment to its students. Classrooms are equipped with integrated technology and designed to support a college-preparatory program, with spaces that encourage collaboration, independence, and self-advocacy. The campus also features a full gymnasium, a dedicated weight room, newly added fabrication and maker spaces, and a theater that serves as the home for Lawrence's robust performing arts program. Outdoor spaces and athletic facilities round out a campus that feels purposeful, welcoming, and alive with student activity.

In 2024, Lawrence completed the acquisition of an adjacent parcel of land, greatly expanding the Upper School's acreage. This expansion positions Lawrence well for the future, creating meaningful opportunities to grow programs, facilities, and impact in the years ahead.





## The Greater Cleveland Area

Lawrence School is located in one of the Midwest's most livable and culturally rich regions. Greater Cleveland offers an appealing combination of affordability, genuine cultural depth, and quality of life that is difficult to match in major metropolitan areas.

The region is home to world-class institutions spanning the arts, healthcare, and higher education. The Cleveland Orchestra, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and Playhouse Square rank among the finest of their kind in the country. The Cleveland Clinic and Case Western Reserve University anchor a thriving healthcare and academic ecosystem that gives the region both national prominence and a strong, mission-aligned professional community.

The cost of living remains significantly lower than in comparable cities, and the region's natural environment adds to its appeal. Lake Erie and the extensive Cleveland Metroparks system offer abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation year-round. Lawrence's campuses in Broadview Heights and Sagamore Hills sit in a comfortable suburban setting with easy access to all that the broader region has to offer.

# PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL



The next Head of School will inherit many assets, including a strong senior leadership team. School leadership and the Board of Trustees completed a successful strategic planning process in 2024, resulting in clear direction and alignment up and down the organization. This includes important initiatives as it relates to admissions, advancement, and marketing and messaging. A new Head of School will have the opportunity to leverage the substantial investments made by senior leadership behind these initiatives to further differentiate Lawrence as a leader in the LD school community.

## The Next Head of School Will...

### 1. Serve as a Visible and Dynamic Ambassador for the School

Serve as the school's chief storyteller and external voice, articulating its mission and impact with clarity and confidence to elevate visibility and reputation. Critically, this includes building relationships and strategic partnerships, locally and nationally, that extend the school's reach and reputation and ensure that the narrative told externally reflects a program of genuine excellence.

### 2. Strengthen Enrollment and Market Position

Recognize enrollment, messaging, and marketing as institutional priorities and serve as an active, visible partner in their advancement. This includes championing the school's distinct identity in learning difference education, lending executive presence and strategic perspective to enrollment initiatives, and supporting the school's positioning within an increasingly competitive independent and public school landscape.

# PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

## 3. Build a Sustainable Culture of Philanthropy

Support the advancement team's ongoing efforts to expand a broad network of strong donor relationships to drive long-term philanthropic growth. The Head of School will serve as an engaged and active partner in this relationship-driven work, representing the school's mission with clarity and confidence to donors and prospective supporters, actively participating in advancement activities, and contributing to a culture of giving that deepens constituent engagement and broadens the philanthropic base necessary to sustain and grow the school's mission.

## 4. Drive Innovation in Learning and Programming

Lead Lawrence School into its next chapter - building on a strong and respected fifty-year foundation while driving innovation in programming, student supports, and learning experiences. This includes staying at the forefront of best practices in learning difference education, setting a clear vision for program growth and evolution, and ensuring the school's offerings reflect the depth and range of opportunities that families seek. The Head of School will set the pace and direction for this work, partnering with academic leadership in its execution while maintaining the school's distinctive mission focus and strengthening its competitive position.

## 5. Align and Integrate a Dual-Campus Program

Establish direct ownership in building a more unified institutional identity across Lawrence School's campuses, ensuring that a coherent "one school" vision is clearly understood and consistently experienced by students, faculty, families, and the broader community. This includes establishing shared programmatic expectations, aligning campus cultures around common values and goals, and ensuring that each location's distinct strengths contribute to a cohesive whole. The Head of School will lead this integration with intention, recognizing it as a foundational responsibility that shapes the school's internal culture and external reputation.

# CANDIDATE ATTRIBUTES & EXPERIENCES



## **The Next Head of School Will:**

### **Communicate with Clarity and Purpose**

Convey ideas effectively across diverse audiences, using clear, authentic communication to build understanding, alignment, and trust. Articulate Lawrence's mission and impact in ways that resonate with families, faculty, donors, and the broader community.

### **Build Trusting, Lasting Relationships**

Earn trust through consistent, transparent communication, genuine listening, and follow-through. Engage meaningfully with students, faculty, families, and trustees to foster a community that is connected, supported, and aligned around a shared mission.

### **Demonstrate Commitment to Mission and Learning Difference Education**

Bring an understanding of learning difference education, or a demonstrated ability and genuine desire to develop that expertise. Ensure that every leadership decision reflects the school's mission and the needs of its students.

### **Lead with Curiosity, Empathy, and Collaboration**

Approach leadership with openness, seek out diverse perspectives, and work collaboratively to solve problems and advance shared goals. Model the growth mindset that Lawrence nurtures in its students.



## The Next Head of School Will (cont'd):

### Lead and Manage Change Effectively

Bring experience guiding organizations through periods of change and growth. Set clear direction, engage stakeholders authentically, communicate with confidence through uncertainty, and sustain momentum over time.

### Demonstrate a Strategic Advancement Mindset

Understand the role of philanthropy in sustaining and advancing an institution. Build meaningful relationships with new and existing donors and supporters, communicate a compelling case for investment, and partner effectively with advancement staff and volunteer leaders.

## Engage in External Relations and Advocacy

Represent Lawrence beyond its campuses with confidence and credibility, building relationships with external partners, peer institutions, and community stakeholders. Bring the judgment and communication skills to navigate complex environments and advocate effectively for the school's mission and the students it serves.

*A master's degree and several years of school leadership are required.*

*A background in learning difference education is desirable but not required.*

# STRATEGIC COMPASS

## Lawrence School | 2024 - 2029

### **Our Mission:**

To teach students using diverse learning strategies, ignite their potential, and inspire academic, personal and social success.

### **DELIVER EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

To provide an appropriately challenging academic curriculum, fulfilling extracurricular opportunities, and personalized post-graduate plans for every student to succeed in life.

### **ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

To increase enrollment and secure a strong foundation for the future by actively marketing the Lawrence brand, leveraging the capacity and expertise of faculty/staff, and building lasting alumni connections.



### **OPTIMIZE CORE RELATIONSHIPS**

To partner with the Board, professionals and community to best serve our students. To partner with parents through communication, education and support.

### **SERVE AS A REGIONAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCE**

To be the first contact regionally, and a resource nationally for families, educators, and professionals, working with students with learning differences.

### **Our Vision:**

One day all students who learn differently will have the opportunity, encouragement and resources to fulfill their potential and benefit society.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

Lawrence School's next Head of School will begin on July 1, 2027. The Board of Trustees has appointed a search committee to conduct the search and has engaged a national executive search firm, Educational Directions, to assist the committee.



## SEARCH CALENDAR

July 1  
*Application Deadline*

August 1 & 2  
*Semifinalist Interviews (in person)*

August 31-September 9  
*Finalist interviews (on site, 2 days)*

Please direct all inquiries and nominations in confidence to:

Jay Underwood at [jay.underwood@edudx.com](mailto:jay.underwood@edudx.com) and  
Garet Libbey at [garet.libbey@edudx.com](mailto:garet.libbey@edudx.com)

Interested individuals should speak with the consultants and email a resume *before* submitting other materials. Prospective candidates must contact the consultants and share a resume at least seven days prior to the deadline below in order to be considered as a candidate in this search.

After an initial conversation with the consultants, applicants should submit the following documents, in this order, in a single PDF via email:

- A letter addressed to Members of the Search Committee explaining their interest in becoming the next Head of Lawrence School, focusing on mission-alignment with the school
- A resume detailing current and previous roles and accomplishments
- A statement of educational leadership philosophy
- The names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of five references with an explanation of their relationship to the candidate

References will not be contacted without the prior agreement of the candidate, and finalists will be expected to furnish five additional references.

*Lawrence School is an Equal Opportunity employer and seeks qualified candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds and identities.*