



# **Marin Academy**

## **Director of Advancement**

### **Position Statement**

**San Rafael, California**  
**August 1, 2021**





## INTRODUCTION, HISTORY AND MISSION

Marin Academy is an independent, college preparatory high school (gr. 9-12) located in San Rafael, California. San Rafael is a charming and appealing community just minutes north of Sausalito and the Golden Gate Bridge. Interestingly, the city's namesake (St. Raphael) from the Mission church located just a few blocks from MA is the patron and protector of adolescents on their life journeys.

The Head of School, Travis Brownley, believes that the best schools (like the best teachers) are both loving and rigorous. Her goal has been to build and sustain lasting traditions of excellence in the many facets of Marin Academy. Within that complexity, schools work, communities grow, and joy is found.

Marin Academy asks every individual to **think, question and create** (the school's motto) in an environment of encouragement and compassion.



The school challenges each person to accept the responsibilities posed by education in a demographic society.

The school was founded in 1971 and started in 1972 (2022-2023 will mark its 50th anniversary celebration) on the campus that previously housed the San Rafael Military Academy.

The school has hewed to its foundational belief and commitment to progressive education. Since its founding, MA has designed its academic and co-curricular program to focus on experiential learning, problem solving and cooperative learning. Competency-based teaching and learning is the modern-day expression of those beliefs. The five key MA competencies identified are:

**Demonstrated Empathy, Imaginative**

**Curiosity, Intellectual Flexibility, Compelling Expression, and Strategic Boldness**

Marin Academy believes that educational excellence should push the boundaries of what is known today in order to prepare students for a world that cannot even be imagined tomorrow. MA teachers and students work side-by-side every day immersing themselves deeply in their subject while honing the ability to think critically and creatively. Because many voices are welcomed and encouraged at MA, students cultivate the tools they need to live their lives fully and as compassionate citizens to the world.

The school's Strategic Plan calls attention to the entire community – students, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees – to reflect the racial, ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic diversity of the Bay Area. To fully live this goal requires the entire school to overcome socioeconomic barriers relevant to place and time and to build and





sustain a diverse school community built on a foundation of equity and inclusion. This translates into confronting barriers, inclusive teaching and learning, acknowledging and respecting differences, and engaging with the broader community and is reflected in programs such as tuition assistance, addressing the question of affordability for school employees, and the [MA Promise](#).

The Marin Academy Board of Trustees is committed to making sure MA is continually innovating while fulfilling its mission to students, families and the community.



The Marin Academy Board of Trustees is currently composed of 25 regular members and includes the Head of School, the Marin Academy Parent Association (MAPA) President, and two faculty representatives. Nimble and effective, the Board has been capably led and understands its role as a governing body, one that is focused on the mission of the school, its financial health and sustainability, and support for the Head of School. The Board is following the Strategic long-range Plan developed for 2017-2026 which has five goals: articulate and refine MA's progressive educational model; build the diverse, equitable and inclusive community; enhance the school's infrastructure; strengthen the culture of generosity; and prioritize accessibility and ensure sustainability. Plans are underway for the next iteration of the Strategic Plan that will extend well into the 21st century.



It is one of the most competitive independent schools in the Bay Area with the school accepting one in four students who apply/applies. Students come from San Francisco the East Bay and Sonoma in addition to Marin County. The 440 current student enrollment comes from 90 different middle schools and 75 different zip codes, with 35% students of color.



## CAMPUS

The campus facilities are beautifully maintained and include a library, a science and innovation center (Platinum LEED certified), a performing arts center (theater and black box included), a visual arts center, a music and dance building, two gymnasiums, and an all-weather synthetic playing field. A competition size pool is being completed as part of Phase IV of the campus master plan. The Bodie Brizendine Leadership Center is the central administration building with additional administration functions housed in Foster Hall, the original Italianate building.

## PROGRAM

Student experience is the north star at Marin Academy.

By questioning and thinking deeply, critically, and creatively, students learn how to embrace ambiguity. They see opportunity where others might see challenge. They find new angles to approach and tackle change. Students are put at the center of their education in an active role with problems, projects and questions that spur them to lean into creative thinking and problem solving. This makes their quest even more meaningful and purposeful.

This learning experience promotes friendly, open dialogue based on respect and trust and encourages building and sustaining meaningful relationships. Through Innovative

thought and action, different individual perspectives are encouraged and respected fueling intellectual curiosity. Joy is a product of being in that supportive, compassionate and inclusive environment. Students and teachers enjoy an extraordinary level of human quality, respect, affection and gratitude for one another as a result.

MA is known for its co-curricular programs that push the boundaries of traditional education. These programs include: 13 BlendEd courses, the Conference on Democracy, Culminating Projects, Literary Festival, MA Research Collaborative, Minicourses, 69 options in its Outings Program (with 40% of the students participating), and Transdisciplinary Leadership Program.

Athletics is a large part of the MA experience, with over 70% of students participating in the junior varsity or varsity level. There are 35 teams and many students are multisport athletes. Wildcat Pride is well-deserved with multiple League Championships and North Coast Section titles over the years.

Parents recognize their children have been prepared for the next stage of their lives in an exemplary fashion and are very pleased with the school. MA graduates are intellectually curious, confident in their relationship with teachers and mentors, balanced and kind individuals. These young adults are ready for the challenges ahead.

**It is an extraordinary community**, both in its caliber of excellence and degree of care for one another. For more details about the school's program, see the school website

[www.marinacademy.org](http://www.marinacademy.org)





### ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFACE

The Head of School, Travis Brownley, arrived in July 2008 from The Wheeler School and brings more than 30 years of educational leadership and accomplishment. Previous stops include The Groton School, The Winsor School, University High School (San Francisco) and the acclaimed Summerbridge Program. Travis has her Bachelor of Arts with distinction from the University of Virginia. At the University of Virginia, Travis received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award for Leadership and Dedication to the Community at UVA. She also has earned a Master of Liberal Arts with distinction from Dartmouth College. This position will necessarily involve close collaboration with Travis.

This position will report to Trent Nutting, the Director of Strategic Engagement. Trent joined MA from Choate Rosemary Hall where he had been an English teacher, Director of Summer Programs and Senior Associate Director of Admissions. Trent has his Bachelor of Arts in English from Middlebury College where he received the College Scholar Award and the Charles Baker Wright Award for Excellence in English. He also holds a J.D. from the University of Connecticut School of Law.

### MA AT A GLANCE

<b>Grades 9-12:</b>	440 Students (35% of color)
<b>Campus Size:</b>	10 Acres
<b>Number of Courses Offered:</b>	113 (65 Electives)
<b>2021-2022 Budget:</b>	\$25 Million
<b>Financial Aid:</b>	\$3.5 Million (22% of Students)
<b>Giving for Operational Support</b> (does not include capital/endowment gifts):	\$2,527,151 (\$1,998,431 Annual Fund)
<b>Tuition:</b>	\$53,705



### THE POSITION OVERVIEW: DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

The Director of Advancement will be responsible for helping to carry out the strategic goals and plans for the Advancement Office working closely with the Advancement Committee and the Board of Trustees under the leadership of the Director of Strategic Engagement Trent Nutting and the Head of School Travis Brownley. The Director of Advancement reports to the Director of Strategic Engagement. The goal for the Director of Advancement is to execute programs of giving that attract the maximum gift support possible to the institution while helping engage diverse audiences of stakeholders

The successful candidate will be an outstanding professional who thinks strategically, communicates a

clear and compelling case for support of the school's mission, follows up on details, and develops and thrives in a team environment. This teamwork means excellent alignment with the Head of School and the Director of Strategic Engagement. In addition to finding financial resources to strengthen financial sustainability, there are non-monetary goals as well: extending the impact of the school, creating goodwill in the community, strengthening the school's excellence and reputation and advancing relationships.

The Director of Advancement will be tasked with plans for the school's upcoming 50th anniversary and extension of the school's capital needs. With the upcoming anniversary and campaign, this person must be fluent in major gift work to maximize the total philanthropic relationship of major gift donors and prospects (both Annual Giving and other) to the school. This means strategizing to

generate higher levels of support and implementation of individual multi-year fundraising plans that focuses on renewals and increased gifts. It also means establishing long-term relationships with major gift donors and converting prospects into donors, while working collaboratively with colleagues and school leaders to meet the school's advancement objectives and mission.

This major gift work focuses on the identification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of leadership gift prospects and donors utilizing written solicitations, phone follow-up, outreach events, face to face meetings, special events and other methods (including gift planning vehicles) to maintain regular contact with these donors and prospects. The Director of Advancement can definitely impact the affinity a prospect and donor has for the institution (what activities will bring a prospect/donor closer; what factors will have an impact on increasing affinity) and can lead to increasing donor interest.

The Director of Advancement will directly oversee a five-person office that includes a Director of Individual Giving, Director of Alumni Engagement, Special Events and Family Engagement Manager, Advancement Database Manager, and Advancement Services and Stewardship Manager. The team is a hard-working, committed, well-trained and high-functioning group who clearly care for one another. They are looking for a leader who will advocate for their office and continue to raise their professional sights.



### ***Duties and Responsibilities***

- Determine how to elicit new approaches to all advancement activities eschewing conventional fundraising practices when appropriate, ensuring a growth mindset approach in office strategies so that Marin Academy's advancement operation serves as a model of advancement for all independent schools.
- Works with the Director of Strategic Engagement to set strategies for each giving program, using innovative solutions and sophisticated data analyses to increase dollars raised, acquire and retain donors, and increase parent and alumni giving participation.
- Manages all aspects of the extended capital campaign, including campaign narrative and messaging.
- Leads and manages staff and volunteers, in coordination with the Admissions Department, to ensure timely and successful onboarding of new families.
- Personally manages a select portfolio of approximately 100 leadership-level annual fund and major gift prospects and executes comprehensive fundraising and stewardship plans for each donor/prospect.
- In collaboration with the Director of Strategic Engagement, arranges donor prospect calls for the Head of School, Trustees and Campaign Advisory Group providing prospect research, background, information and the most effective strategies to maximize donor potential for giving.
- Works with the appropriate staff to secure project information and uses this information to develop materials directed at individual donors/prospects, such as highly personalized proposals that are in line with donor interests and programmatic priorities.
- Ensures portfolio activity and progress is recorded in the school's database.
- Develops special cultivation and stewardship opportunities with the Special Events and Family Engagement Manager, such as small events for select donor/prospects, and participate in larger donor cultivation and fundraising events.
- Assists in the identification and training of potential leadership volunteers and other partners to engage in major gifts outreach.
- Works with the Trustee Advancement Committee, Marin Academy Parent Association, and Alumni Class Agents in planning fund-raising efforts; sets goals, timelines and monitors progress.
- Works on developing and implementing a planned giving program.
- Works closely with appropriate staff members, attends and participates in the organization and implementation of functions such as new parent events, reunion activities for purposes of cultivation and stewardship.
- Manages and maintains effective data resources in coordination with the Business Office and Admissions Office. Ensures the reliability and accuracy of systems for gift accounting and acknowledgment, pledge collection, Business Office reconciliation, prospect research and prospect management to support the department's initiatives.
- Collaborates with the Director of Communications, content and brand strategy to make sure these are integrated into donor segmentation and fundraising initiatives so as to advance the mission of the school.
- Stays current in the use of various media sites, e.g., Facebook, YouTube,

LinkedIn, to communicate with parent and alumni affinity groups.

- Participates in professional development, accountability skill and performance assessment tools to ensure maximum results.
- Prepares reports and other materials to facilitate evaluation of progress toward meeting objectives, submits monthly reports to the Board of Trustees.
- Attends all scheduled Board of Trustee Advancement Committee meetings, Finance Committee and Gift Policy Committee meetings, as well as monthly Board of Trustee meetings as necessary.
- Manages the Advancement Office budget.
- Performs all other duties as assigned by the Director of Strategic Engagement.

### **Qualifications:**

- Commitment to Marin Academy's mission.
- Bachelor's degree required and relevant advanced degree preferred.
- A proven track record of progressively challenging fundraising success, including annual operating support, major gifts, capital campaigns and planned giving.

- Outstanding analytical skills and proven success in using data-analytics and prospect wealth screening resources to develop programs and drive results.
- Demonstrated ability to build successful fundraising initiatives and appeals using current best-practices and new technologies to produce outstanding results.
- Strong and demonstrated success in leading, managing and dealing diplomatically and comfortably with a diverse community of parents, students, alumni, volunteers, partners and colleagues and have the presence, demeanor, and communication skills necessary to represent all of Marin Academy's constituency effectively; excellent responsiveness to all constituencies.
- Vision, creativity, flexibility, and the capacity to develop a departmental strategic plan for raising philanthropic support to execute the school's strategic plan.
- Core belief in leading diversity, equity, and inclusion work forward in schools.
- Strong understanding of current digital communications, social media, fundraising software, and email-based solicitations.

- Excellent oral and written communication skills with experience collaborating with a Communication staff in the writing of persuasive gift appeals.
- The personality, energy, intellectual integrity, warmth and leadership ability to inspire a school community; positive, passionate, can-do spirit.
- Understanding of independent school communities and culture, including an eagerness to work hard as both leader and team member.
- The ability to meet deadlines within context of a complex office/school/community calendar.
- Independent school experience is highly desirable.
- Leads from the front, confronts challenges head-on with appropriate transparency, building trust across all constituent groups within the school community.
- Desire to be visible, engaged, and an optimistic presence within the MA community.
- Excellent oral, written communication and presentation skills.
- Active engagement in professional development and understanding of current best practices.



- Demonstrated ability to use good judgment and maintain confidentiality.
- Personable, positive, helpful personality; customer-service mindset.
- Sensitivity, discretion, and a sense of humor.
- Detail oriented with excellent organizational skills.
- Ability to manage and prioritize multiple responsibilities simultaneously.
- Ability to manage competing demands, and adapt to frequent or unexpected changes.
- Active listener and skillful communicator who is approachable, empathetic, and compassionate.
- Effective manager of people and resources who hires well and delegates appropriately.



## ARE YOU THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB?

- Do you believe in the unlimited potential of young people to help shape our world?
- Do you have the vision and strategic thinking to be a part of an institution that is “smart,” wise, professional in its operations, and committed to continual improvement?
- Do you have a mind-set to create a culture of philanthropy and have successfully solicited and closed major gifts (5- and 6-figure gifts)?
- Do you have the experience in education, preferably in an independent school setting, to build upon Marin Academy’s educational programs, promoting pedagogical excellence?
- Can you handle the considerable range of tasks – from major gift solicitations to helping with the smallest details of an event?
- Can you encourage and actively support change and innovation while retaining the core values and traditions of a school?
- Do you have a growth mindset? Are you comfortable with an experimental and entrepreneurial work environment?
- Do you have facility with equity and inclusion work required to embrace and support a diverse and dedicated community of faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni?
- Are you a person of strength, gentleness, and authenticity?
- Are you comfortable with the locational realities of San Francisco as a major metropolitan center, knowing that Marin Academy has a culture and personality all its own?

### Work Environment & Complexity

Duties and tasks in this position are varied and complex. The position works on whole problems or projects. This position directs projects and the challenges are resolved with complex and precedent setting solutions. This position requires a high degree of collaboration. This position operates in a professional school environment. The functions of this position are performed in a typical office environment with no known hazards.

### Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position, such as the ability to see, hear, speak and understand English and use a computer. This position is active and requires standing and walking, including stairs.

### Travel

Regular and overnight travel is expected in this position. A valid driver's license and passport required.

The successful candidate will receive a compensation package that includes a highly competitive salary plus generous health and retirement benefits.

This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee. Other duties, responsibilities and activities may change or be assigned at any time with or without notice.

Application submission screening and interviews will be completed on a rolling basis until filled.



Marin Academy is committed to diversity at all levels.

Marin Academy is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, ethnic, background, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

### Marin Academy

1600 Mission Avenue  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
415.453.4550

The successful candidate will receive a compensation package that includes a highly competitive salary plus generous health and retirement benefits.

### Background Check

Prior to submitting your resume for this position, please read it for accuracy. RG175 verifies academic credentials for its candidates and conducts a thorough review of candidates' social media presence. Marin Academy will conduct thorough background checks prior to finalizing an offer.

## TO APPLY

Prospective candidates may apply online at:

<https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>

The application includes:

- A cover letter detailing his/her interest in the position and his/her suitability for it
- An updated *curriculum vitae* or *resume*
- A copy of original writing on any subject of interest to the candidate that can be written for this exercise or provided from something written previously.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Pattison, consultant from Resource Group 175 overseeing the search at: [jpattison@rg175.com](mailto:jpattison@rg175.com)

**Deadline: July 31, 2021** but experience has shown that sooner is better than later!