THE ATHENIAN SCHOOL

Director of Educational Technology

SUMMARY

Location | Danville, CA

Post Date | February 11, 2021

Application Deadline | March 12, 2021 at 5:00pm PST

Semifinal Round | March 22 and 23 (Remote)

Final Round | Week of April 5 (Most likely remote)

Decision Announced | April 23, 2021

Start Date | July 1, 2021

Ed Tech
RECRUITING

SUMMARY

Internationalism. Democracy. Environmentalism. Adventure. Leadership. Service. These are the pillars of Round Square, an international network of 180+ schools in 50+ countries that The Athenian School co-founded. Athenian, a grades 6-12 day and boarding independent school located on 75 acres near the rolling East Bay hills of the San Francisco Bay Area, has been living out its mission of experiential learning as a Round Square school since 1966.

At Athenian, leading educational technology is more about creating an invitation for faculty to experience and explore new ideas than it is about deploying hardware for the sake of rapid change. Athenian seeks a director of educational technology who is skilled at building faculty partnerships and adept with technology design and implementation — from both an instructional and systems point of view. The job includes oversight of two IT professionals and affords the opportunity to collaborate with numerous coordinators, deans, and directors working in different co-curricular domains. The next director of educational technology at Athenian will start July 1, 2021.

THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AT ATHENIAN

1. PROGRAM

Athenian will lead the school world in creating the next generation of rigorous, project-based, experiential, and interdisciplinary curricula to deliver the knowledge and skills that students need to both succeed in an information economy and make a meaningful contribution in the world. In doing so, Athenian will be guided by the pillars or IDEALS of Round Square, an organization that Athenian helped found in 1966 and whose pillars continue to guide its curricular and strategic efforts. One initial focus will be a fully integrated community service and engagement program.

2. COMMUNITY

Athenian will continue to develop, foster, and sustain an inclusive and diverse school community in which all students, parents, faculty, alumni, and staff can be their authentic selves and thrive, academically, physically, and emotionally. Athenian takes collective responsibility to provide meaningful support to other communities—both local and global.

3. RESOURCES

Athenian will position its organizational assets to enable the school to achieve the strategic visions for program, community, and facilities well into the future.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Athenian School prepares students for the rigorous expectations of college and for a life of purpose and personal fulfillment.

We offer a challenging academic program with a difference: intellectual inquiry is active, learning is interactive, the disciplines are interrelated, and analysis and creativity thrive simultaneously. The acquisition of knowledge becomes authentic and joyous.

We cultivate the personal qualities of each student to become an integrated human being with integrity, strong moral character, aesthetic sensitivity, and physical well-being. The Athenian community requires students to face life directly through open communication, while developing their inner strength to exceed their perceived potential and emerge compassionate, responsible adults.

We instill an appreciation of the reciprocal relationship between the individual and cultures, society and the natural world. We value the power and beauty of multiculturalism within our diverse community. We embrace the principles of democratic governance, stewardship of the environment, respect for human dignity, and service as a way of life.

By providing an atmosphere of intellectual, artistic, and physical challenge within the warmth of a nurturing community, we develop in our students the confidence and skills required to meet the complexities of their future.

ROUND SQUARE

As a founding member of Round Square, an international network of more than 100 schools on six continents, Athenian embraces the philosophy that binds the schools. This philosophy is rooted in six main pillars: International and Multicultural Understanding, Democracy in Action, Environmental Awareness, Adventure, Leadership, and Service.

These values are embedded in everything that Athenian does. Students have countless opportunities to experience and explore these themes. Through the Round Square membership, students have unmatched opportunities to go on exchanges, service trips, and international conferences through sister Round Square schools.

HISTORY OF ATHENIAN

The Athenian School was founded in 1965 by Dyke Brown, a graduate of Yale Law School, who was then-Vice President of the Ford Foundation. Dyke envisioned a school with the goal of Periclean Athens — the full development of each citizen. Intellectual growth, fitness of body and character, commitment to humane values, aesthetic sensitivity, and readiness for adult citizenship and leadership are Athenian's objectives for each student.

The Athenian School was built on what was then known as the Blackhawk Ranch, at the foot of Mt. Diablo. It was originally a boarding school, grades nine through twelve, creating a 24/7 community of learners in a rural setting. In 1979, the Middle School was added, accepting day students in grades six through eight. The demand for an Athenian education from the local community prompted the School to begin admitting more day students in the 1970s. Today, along with many new facilities and a larger number of day students, Athenian remains a close-knit family of those actively engaged in a thriving learning community.

Far ahead of his time, Dyke realized the importance of service, international understanding, diversity and adventure as integral parts of a strong academic curriculum. Over 50 years later, Athenian's ideals have become a model for education in the 21st century.

Today, more than 140 people live on campus, including students, faculty, staff, children, and their pets. The residential community gathers regularly on and off campus for meals and fun activities. The informal opportunities to spend time with boarding students, colleagues, and residential families foster a warm environment, creating a home away from home for our boarding students. Along with many new facilities and a larger number of day students, Athenian remains a close-knit, thriving learning community.

STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

Equity, inclusion and diversity are much more than social principles at Athenian; they are educational imperatives. Upholding them is at the core of Athenian's philosophy and a necessary precursor to meeting our mission goal of graduating culturally competent, global citizens who enter the world as community builders. Therefore, Athenian counts on its students, families, faculty, staff, and board members to support this ideal and respect the diversity of our community of varied race, national and/or ethnic origin, socioeconomic class, faith, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Required course work, all-school activities, student clubs and co-curricular programs advance equity, inclusion, diversity, and social justice at Athenian. Athenian is committed to upholding and protecting the dignity and worth of all people, recognizing everyone's shared humanity.

HOW ATHENIAN EDUCATES ITS STUDENTS

The Athenian curriculum focuses on the six Round Square pillars (International and Multicultural Understanding, Democracy in Action, Environmental Awareness, Adventure, Leadership, and Service). Students at Athenian immerse themselves deeply in coursework, inspiring each other to think critically and collaborate as global citizens.

STUDENTS WILL GRADUATE FROM THE ATHENIAN SCHOOL AS:

Learners, who find joy in the acquisition and application of knowledge to practical challenges and develop skills in critical thinking, physical and social-emotional wellness, communication, and project mastery;

Thinkers, who acquire a wide breadth of knowledge in the arts, humanities, language, mathematics, and sciences through a rigorous and innovative curriculum;

Creative problem solvers, who take responsible risks and engage in interdisciplinary and experiential learning, design thinking, computational thinking, and making;

Collaborators, who listen, reflect and express themselves in a variety of modes with purpose, clarity, and excellence; and,

Community builders and global citizens, who act in service to others with empathy, honesty, and integrity.

LEARNING OUTCOMES OF AN ATHENIAN EDUCATION

Critical thinking: Using data as the object of inquiry, analysis, synthesis, and reflection; Asking open-ended questions and drawing logical conclusions

Physical & Social-Emotional Wellness: Adventure experiences; Athletic fitness & competition; Movement expression; Mentorship and apprenticeship; Leadership; Self-advocacy

Communication: Written communication; Oral communication and listening skills; Visual expression; Performance

Project Mastery: Conceiving and completing projects; Organizing resources and assembling a product; Working independently and in groups; Optimization; Experimenting and failing; Responding to setbacks with resilience

ROUND SQUARE PILLARS AT ATHENIAN

An Athenian education is built on six Round Square pillars (know by their acronym, IDEALS) that are the foundation for everything the school does. Its mission and pillars encourage students to seek lives of meaning and purpose. Those pillars are:

Internationalism: Athenian students build cross-cultural skills that will serve them throughout their lives and help them come to see themselves as global citizens. The campus community includes international students representing nearly 20 countries, and most students participate in an array of international experiences.

Democracy: Students have a voice at Athenian and participate actively through town meetings, student forums, and classes like Democracy in Action. Through this hands-on involvement, they learn how to make positive changes in their communities.

Environmentalism: Athenian students show respect and care toward the natural environment, and they develop an awareness of problems that they can take an active role in fixing. Students build an understanding of the natural world and the human connection to it.

Adventure: In Athenian's outdoor adventure and travel programs, as well as The Athenian Wilderness Experience, students develop teamwork, cross-cultural skills, and the ability to step beyond their comfort zone.

Leadership: Through the Athenian experiences, students discover the importance and meaning of leadership, making a positive contribution, acting with integrity, and being of service to others.

Service: At Athenian, students develop qualities of volunteerism and compassion through community service and educational programs. Students are encouraged to find ways to apply their individual passions to projects that make a positive difference in the world.

CO-CURRICULAR PARTNERS TO TECHNOLOGY

Two co-curricular programs at Athenian have natural intersections with technology and are led by directors who would be willing thought-partners for the director of educational technology.

1. CARTER INNOVATION STUDIO (CIS DIRECTOR)

For years, Athenian students constructed airplanes in an old hanger. For almost as long, robotics teams prepared for competitions in a tucked-away corner of the campus. Programs like robotics and the airplane project—along with many others—have until recently relied on less-than-ideal facilities. Yet, because collaboration, innovation, and design are cornerstones of the Athenian teaching and learning program, Athenian students and faculty have never let facilities challenges stand in the way of their true passions for hands-on, experiential learning. As a result, Athenian is a school that has launched two airplanes into flight and boasts a robotics team with over 50 highly engaged students.

But now, with the opening of the Carter Innovation Studio (CIS) in fall 2018, an exciting new chapter has just begun. The CIS is a 5,200-square-foot crown jewel that is more than just a STEAM innovation center. The CIS is a hub for fabrication, design, engineering, shop, and computational thinking. The CIS was designed not only to support its own classes, but also to invite existing classes to leverage and incorporate design and engineering principles into more traditional disciplines.

Collaboration is the cornerstone of innovation, and it sparks intellectual exploration for our students and our teachers. The Carter Innovation Studio immerses students in Athenian's hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to education that emphasizes active learning, making, and risk-taking. The CIS features three classrooms and includes a shop area with metal and woodworking tools, an industrial arts area, and a digital fabrication studio with laser cutters and professional-grade 3D printers. Its central location at the heart of Athenian's campus serves as a hub of student creativity across all disciplines.

2. THE LIBRARY (LIBRARY DIRECTOR)

The Athenian School Library Program supports the school curriculum through specialized collection development, teacher collaboration, information literacy instruction, and technology, and offers flexible teaching and learning facilities. In addition to its extensive collection of books, films, databases, and archival collections, the Library is a hub for student activity. The Library hosts community events, displays student art, leads student book groups, and provides a technology lending collection. The robust student-centered fiction collection, comfortable reading spaces, creative book displays and engaged Library staff promote a rich and fulfilling reading experience. Students and parents are integral to the Library program and can serve on the Library Advisory Board or as Library volunteers.

The mission of The Athenian School Library is to be the intellectual and cultural heart of the school providing exceptional resources, facilities, and services to support our entire learning community. This is accomplished by:

- Curating a diverse collection of resources in various formats that enriches the curricular offerings and promotes independent learning, experimentation, and discovery

- Collaborating with faculty to guide proficient, ethical, and discerning information users across the curriculum

- Encouraging the love of reading and appreciation of literature

- Developing dynamic, interactive, educational and inclusive library programming in a welcoming, versatile, and comfortable space

- Empowering student leadership in library activities and decision-making

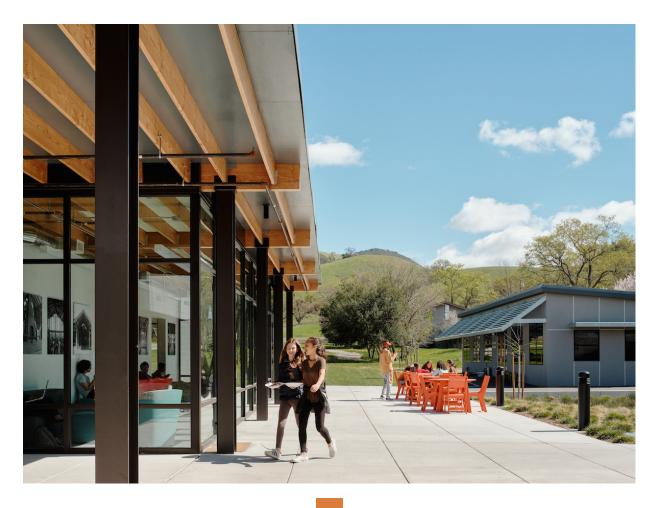- Fostering lifelong learning and intellectual curiosity

BACKGROUND AND OPPORTUNITIES

THE DAWN OF AN EXCITING ERA

This experiential school at the base of a state park prides itself as resisting the winds of trendy change that often sweep across other schools, particularly those closer to the hustle and bustle of Silicon Valley. But that doesn't mean that Athenian lacks a progressive, inventive, and forward-thinking culture. It simply means that at Athenian, patience, finesse, and empathy are important skills for any change-minded programmatic leader to have.

However, even at organizations that approach change more methodically there are moments of transitional confluence. Without a doubt, this is one of those times at Athenian. With the current director of teaching and learning, who has been at the school for thirteen years, about to become the head of another school in California, Athenian has decided, after careful reflection, to restructure its leadership structure. The two divisional heads have been elevated to assistant heads of school and will assume full faculty evaluation duties — allowing the school to develop positions aligned with current needs.

At this time, the school is prioritizing roles of influence to work with faculty in various co-curricular domains. To that end, for next school year Athenian is currently hiring a dean of experiential education (a new role) and just hired a director of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice (a role that had previously existed Athenian). Like these and other co-curricular program leaders at Athenian, the director of educational technology at Athenian has two separate but related sets of duties: ensure robust operations of the domain at hand, and inspire pedagogical innovation and exploration among faculty.

THE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM AT ATHENIAN: OPERATIONS AND INFLUENCE

At Athenian, technology *operations* comprises IT infrastructure, data/systems, and end-user support. The director of educational technology oversees an information systems director and a help desk technician that work across these three areas. Given the recent increased reliance on enterprise data applications over the last several years, the technology department has tended to play an increased role in the data/systems area. And of course, at a school like Athenian everyone in the department wears many hats, particularly when it comes to supporting front-line needs.

But for Athenian, pedagogical innovation through technology *influence* is just as important for the director of educational technology as operational oversight. It is worth restating, however, that innovation at Athenian is not fueled by those winds of trendy change. Successful, sustained innovation occurs as a result of establishing personal relationships and building deep trust, both of which often require taking the long view. Like the newly created dean of experiential education role, the next director of educational technology must see innovation through the lens of instructional design, which at Athenian occurs through conversations at the lunch table, walk-and-talks along the park trails, impromptu meetings with colleagues popping into an open office, and in-the-trenches guidance during co-taught lessons. To that last point, anyone at Athenian who wants to earn and establish the trust of teachers must do some classroom teaching, even if that work occurs sporadically during one of the many experiential mini-courses in both divisions.

In the last three years, the technology department has transformed to become a critical partner for both academic and operational needs. Meanwhile, since the last time this position was hired, the school has brought on board new directors in the areas of innovation/design thinking and library, both of whom have ideas for how Athenian might continue to expand its exploration of instructional technology and would welcome a partnership with the director of educational technology. Thus, the next director of educational technology should not only be able to lead a small team and be excited to support in-the-trenches integration, but also approach the important work of developing a vision and strategy from a place of collaboration and inclusion. With this open and patient mindset, the next director of educational technology is sure to find success at Athenian.

KEY STATISTICS

Founded: 1965

Campus: Athenian's 75-acre campus of rolling, oak-covered hills lies at the base of Mt. Diablo State Park in Danville, CA just 32 miles east of San Francisco.

Students: Approximately 530 students attend Athenian in grades 6 through 12 (175 students in middle school; 360 students in high school), including nearly 60 upper school boarding students coming from 16 countries on five continents. 100% of Athenian students who apply to four-year colleges are admitted.

Faculty and Staff: Athenian employs over 76 full- and part-time faculty, with a faculty-to-student ratio of 9:1. Approximately 74% of teachers have advanced degrees.

Diversity: Nearly 59% of students come from self-identified families of color. Over 30% of faculty are people of color.

Admission: An acceptance rate of 48% and a yield of 89%

Accreditation: California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Relevant Associations and Memberships: National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS); California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS); California Teacher Development Collaborative (CATDC); Council for Advancement and Support of Educations (CASE); Round Square (RS); Green Schools Alliance (GSA); Bay Area Green Business Program; Bay Area BlendEd Consortium

Financial Aid: 24% of the student body receives financial aid totaling $3.5 million.

Financials: Operating budget approximately $24M; Endowment approximately $10M

Website: www.athenian.org

QUOTE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

"When it comes to design and engineering centers, at some schools the mantra is: build it, and they will (hopefully) come. At Athenian, the mantra is: we have come to build."

Eric Niles, Head of School

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Operational Oversight

- Under the direction of the chief operational officer, oversee the daily operations of the technology department at Athenian.

- Supervise the IT unit, which includes a director of information systems and a help desk technician.

- Align departmental procedures, policies, and end-user support with the mission and culture of the school in such a way that builds effective bridges and partnerships with end-users.

- Oversee the performance and integrity of the school's enterprise data / systems environment, and coordinate major systems transitions when needed.

Faculty Partnership

- Support and inspire teachers in both divisions to integrate technology into the core curriculum by working one-on-one with faculty to build trust and excitement.

- Serve as an instructional design partner and mentor to teachers.

- Design, deliver, and oversee professional development and growth experiences in the areas of technology integration and instructional design.

- Be visible in the classroom, both with teachers to support their professional growth, and with students through a modest teaching component during the occasional experiential class, which at a school like Athenian is essential to build faculty trust.

General Leadership and Program Management

- In partnership with other co-curricular program leaders as well as the assistant heads of school for each division, develop and implement a thoughtful 6-12 vision for instructional technology.

- Establish and maintain local, regional, and national connections to support the strategic goals of the school's technology program.

- Serve on committees as directed, including the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Professional Development Committee.

- Perform other duties as assigned.

ATHENIAN IS LOOKING FOR CANDIDATES WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE…

Professional Qualifications and Experience:

- Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, though a graduate degree in the areas of curriculum, instruction, or educational technology would be highly desirable

- Experience running a department, leading programs, or managing major projects and initiatives, preferably in a school's technology environment

- Experience leading workshops, trainings, projects, and new initiatives related to technology systems and tools aligned with an organization's strategic objectives

- Training or teaching experience, preferably in a 6-12 school, and a track record of successfully leveraging technology to improve instruction and learning outcomes

- Experience managing and administering enterprise data systems and applications

- Immersion in diversity work — both in training and in implementation — and a commitment to fostering culturally competent and inclusive learning environments

Leadership and Personal Qualities:

- An ability to build consensus among diverse groups, facilitate critical discussions within large groups, and instill confidence in colleagues during times of transition

- Inspirational and diplomatic leadership sensitive to the needs of a diverse faculty

- Commitment to and facility with faculty support, professional development, and instructional innovation leadership

- A collaborative, cooperative, empathetic, collegial, innovative, and patient mindset

- Exceptional communication skills: written, verbal, presentation, and training

- An understanding of the diverse technology needs of a independent school that simultaneously values experiential and outdoor education

- A commitment to the mission and values of Athenian

- Confidence and humility, together with a sense of humor and warm personality

- A love of learning and a love for school

HOW TO APPLY

Ed Tech Recruiting is acting on behalf of Athenian to identify exceptional leaders in experiential education to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

> Gabriel Lucas
> Principal, Ed Tech Recruiting
> jobs@EdTechRecruiting.com

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED THROUGH MARCH 12, 2021.

All applications must be submitted online, via:

> www.EdTechRecruiting.com/jobs/athenian

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to the Athenian search committee

- CV or résumé

- A list of four references (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you—though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)

- Response to the following prompt:

  Where have you taken the long view with educational technology and innovation? When you have sensed an exciting opportunity to explore a new educational technology tool or system, but you have received a healthy skepticism or cautious hesitance to "take the plunge," what has been your approach to build organizational interest, capacity, and ultimately support for change?

The Athenian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, faith, sex, gender or gender expression, age, ability, sexual orientation, familial or marital status. The Athenian School is actively seeking to create a more culturally diverse school community and as such, we encourage people of color and members of the LGBTIQ community to apply. Athenian's salary and benefits are competitive and include medical, vision, and dental insurance, a retirement plan, a smoke-free environment, and a daily prepared lunch.