Mary McDowell Friends School

Chief Technology Officer

LOCATION
Brooklyn, NY

REMOTE CLIENT INTERVIEWS
Mid-November to Mid-December

START DATE
July 1, 2025

POST DATE
October 1, 2024

ON-SITE FINAL ROUND
Weeks of January 13 & 20

REPORTS TO
Head of School

PRIORITY DEADLINE
November 1, 2024

DECISION ANNOUNCED
January 31, 2025

SALARY RANGE
$200,000 to $220,000

40
MARY McDOWELL FRIENDS SCHOOL
MMFS at 40: A Brilliant Future

Ed Tech RECRUITING

Summary

Mary McDowell Friends School (MMFS) is a K-12 college preparatory program dedicated to the success of students with learning disabilities. Grounded in the Quaker values of equality, integrity, and social responsibility, MMFS cultivates a diverse community where all students can reach their full potential. With three distinct campuses (Lower, Middle, Upper) within a one-mile radius of each other in the heart of Brooklyn, MMFS is an outstanding place to work, to learn, and to serve.

The chief technology officer (CTO) leads a mission-driven department of nine full-time professionals, in addition to seasonal and temporary workers. At MMFS, all areas of technology are overseen by the CTO, from tech integration and curriculum, to data and systems, to infrastructure and support. With no dedicated network administrator or outside MSP, the CTO at MMFS has to lead with a hands-on approach on the IT/IS side of the house. At the same time, each campus has a dedicated IT specialist and ed tech specialist to support day-to-day operational needs of that particular division, and the department has an assistant director of educational technology to manage the instructional tech program. The ideal candidate would have a breadth of technical knowledge, experience in a distributed and enterprise environment, unwavering commitment to DEI and anti-racism, and excitement for working at a school serving LD students. Although the role begins July 1, 2025, MMFS is hoping to complete the hiring process by early 2025 to allow for a smooth handoff from the current interim CTO, who is serving in a one-year capacity for the 24-25 year. The CTO reports directly to the head of school and is a member of the school leadership team.

MISSION

Mary McDowell Friends School is a K–12 college preparatory program dedicated to the success of students with learning disabilities.

Grounded in the Quaker values of equality, integrity, and social responsibility, we cultivate a diverse and anti-racist community in which all students can reach their full potential. Our specialized teaching methodologies and challenging curricula empower students to become academic achievers, creative thinkers, advocates for equity, and contributing members of a global society.

Our Values

LEARNING

Students with learning disabilities can learn and thrive within a supportive environment coupled with a challenging curriculum. We prepare students for college and life.

QUAKER VALUES

We are guided by the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

We embrace a broad definition of diversity and recognize the power and value it delivers to our lives. We strive to provide an equitable and safe environment for our entire community.

ANTI-RACISM

Anti-racism is key to the mission and curriculum of MMFS, as we challenge ourselves to dismantle systemic racism in our community and the world around us.

EXCELLENCE

We pursue excellence at every level.

Our Guiding Principles

- Students with learning disabilities are intelligent.
- Learning disabilities are one aspect of a person, not the defining characteristic.
- Special education is quality education.
- Learning goes beyond mastery of content and skills; it includes creative thinking, questioning, discovery, and further research to formulate cogent opinions and perspectives on the world.
- We believe that Black lives matter, and that we have a responsibility to challenge not only our national legacy of systemic racism but also the structural inequities within our own community.
- Our community embraces each individual while fostering equity among students, families, staff, trustees, and educators.
- The Quaker testimonies provide an essential foundation for all that we do.
- Our faculty and staff are experts in their fields, which helps us maintain our position at the forefront of special education.
- Our curriculum is based on well-researched and proven methodologies.
- We offer a comprehensive educational program that includes academics, arts, athletics, travel, and social responsibility.
- Our differentiated approaches to learning address each student's strengths and struggles.
- We teach students to understand their learning needs so that they can advocate for themselves.
- Our students who are ready for mainstream schools will be transitioned to mainstream schools.

Our Commitment to Anti-Racism and Equity

The Mary McDowell Friends School community is committed to providing students, families, faculty, and staff with a learning and working environment that addresses racism and inequity with integrity and action. We welcome diversity in many ways, including race, color, culture, age, sex, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression and identity, family composition, ethnicity, nationality, religious expression, and disability. We commit to building an appreciation and understanding of each individual as well as of our community as a whole. We celebrate the strength of our diversity.

We commit to making anti-racism and equity central to our mission of cultivating "a diverse and anti-racist community in which all students can reach their full potential." We believe that Black lives matter, and that we have a responsibility to challenge not only our national legacy of systemic racism but also the structural inequities within our own community. We will amplify our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) voices, and look to Quaker tradition to guide us in creating a safe, inclusive, and equitable school. It is essential that we embrace our Quaker values and testimonies as we work toward anti-racism and equity in our community and beyond.

Why Our Students Thrive

Quaker Practice

Mary McDowell Friends School is the only Quaker school for students with learning disabilities in New York City. While there are 78 Quaker schools located throughout the United States, Mary McDowell Friends School is one of just six special education Friends schools in the United States and the only one with the distinction of educating students in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

With our unique place in the Friends school community, Mary McDowell Friends School proudly embraces our rich history of Quakerism. One of the core themes of Quakerism is that anyone, young or old, can have access to "inner light"—an innate goodness and commonality at the center of every person.

We strive to develop a community of learners, staff and faculty, families, trustees, and friends, who recognize "that of Good" in one another and work to ensure that our actions as individuals and groups foster this belief in our school community and in the world beyond.

Revealing Brilliance

Every day and in every class, our students receive the instruction and support they need to be successful. Educational materials, technology, and classroom furnishings are strategically developed to best facilitate learning for our students who struggle with language-based, sensory, and/or motor issues. The academics are intellectually challenging, the arts are outstanding, and the athletics are spirited, competitive, and fun.

Our approach to educating students with learning disabilities focuses on the learning process itself. The best way to sum up our approach is "Revealing Brilliance." Building on each student's strengths, we teach skills needed for learning today and tomorrow.

Our teachers are at the top of their fields and they implement a robust academic program that builds and empowers global citizens. We teach our students how to advocate for themselves and we believe that every voice is important. Our Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and service are evident in all aspects of life here. We celebrate our diversity. We are multiracial, people of color, Latinx, white, gender fluid, queer, and straight with many religious affiliations and various family constellations. All of these reasons and more contribute to the thriving state of our school.

MARY MCDOWELL FRIENDS SCHOOL: LEARNING DISABILITIES DEFINITION

A learning disability is a neurological condition that causes difficulties with the way the brain handles information. These difficulties can interfere with important learning skills such as reading, writing, and/or math, as well as receptive and expressive language, organization, planning and managing time, reasoning, attention, and long and short term memory.

Children with learning disabilities are as smart as or smarter than their peers, but they usually find it difficult to learn in a typical manner; however, with different learning methods and strategies, they can be just as academically successful as students without learning disabilities.

Key Stats

432 Students

118 Lower School Students

134 Middle School Students

180 Upper School Students

Association Memberships

New York State Association of Independent Schools **(NYSAIS)**

National Association of Independent Schools **(NAIS)**

Guild of Independent Schools of New York **(GISNY)**

Friends Council on Education **(FCE)**

Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools **(ATLIS)**

227 Faculty and Staff

6:1 Avg. Student : Teacher Ratio

ENDOWMENT
$4.6 million

OPERATING BUDGET
$36.5 million

TECHNOLOGY BUDGET
$450k - 600k

Technology at a Glance

HARDWARE
- Chromebooks (students), MS Surface (faculty), Mac (BYOD only)
- 1:1 device ratio
- Meraki network and firewalls

SYSTEMS
- Google Suite, Google Classroom
- Jumpcloud (device management)
- Veracross as primary system of record, Paylocity for HR

NETWORK
- Cisco Meraki MX100 and MX250
- 3 firewalls with dual ISP input
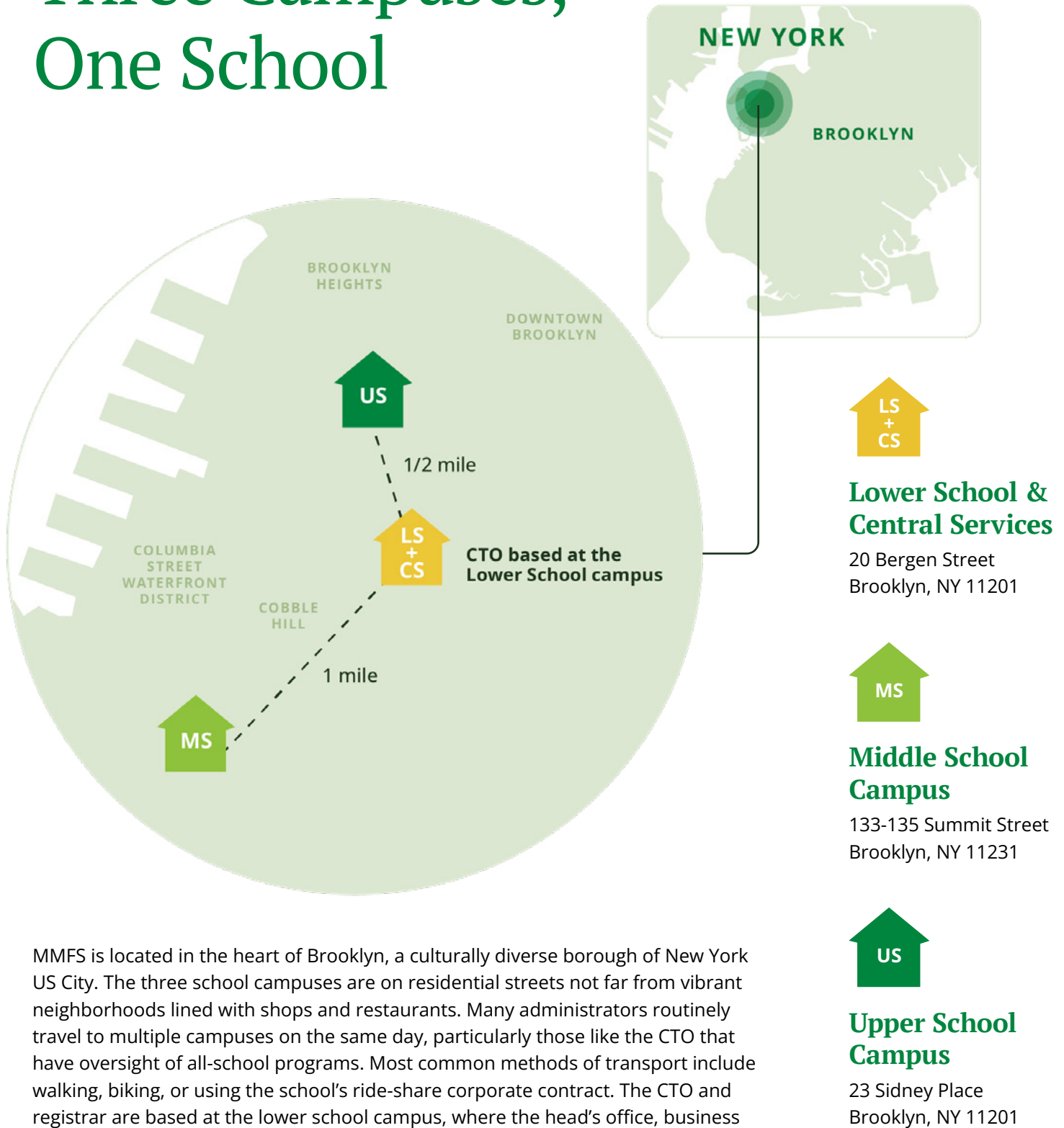- 40+ switches
- 160+ APs
- Content filtering in place

CAMPUS SITES
- 25 US classrooms
- 15 MS classrooms
- 23 LS classrooms
- ~25 printers / building
- RingCentral VoIP phones

www.marymcdowell.org

Three Campuses, One School

NEW YORK

BROOKLYN

BROOKLYN
HEIGHTS

DOWNTOWN
BROOKLYN

US

1/2 mile

COLUMBIA
STREET
WATERFRONT
DISTRICT

LS
+
CS

**CTO based at the
Lower School campus**

COBBLE
HILL

1 mile

MS

LS
+
CS

Lower School &
Central Services

20 Bergen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

MS

Middle School
Campus

133-135 Summit Street
Brooklyn, NY 11231

US

Upper School
Campus

23 Sidney Place
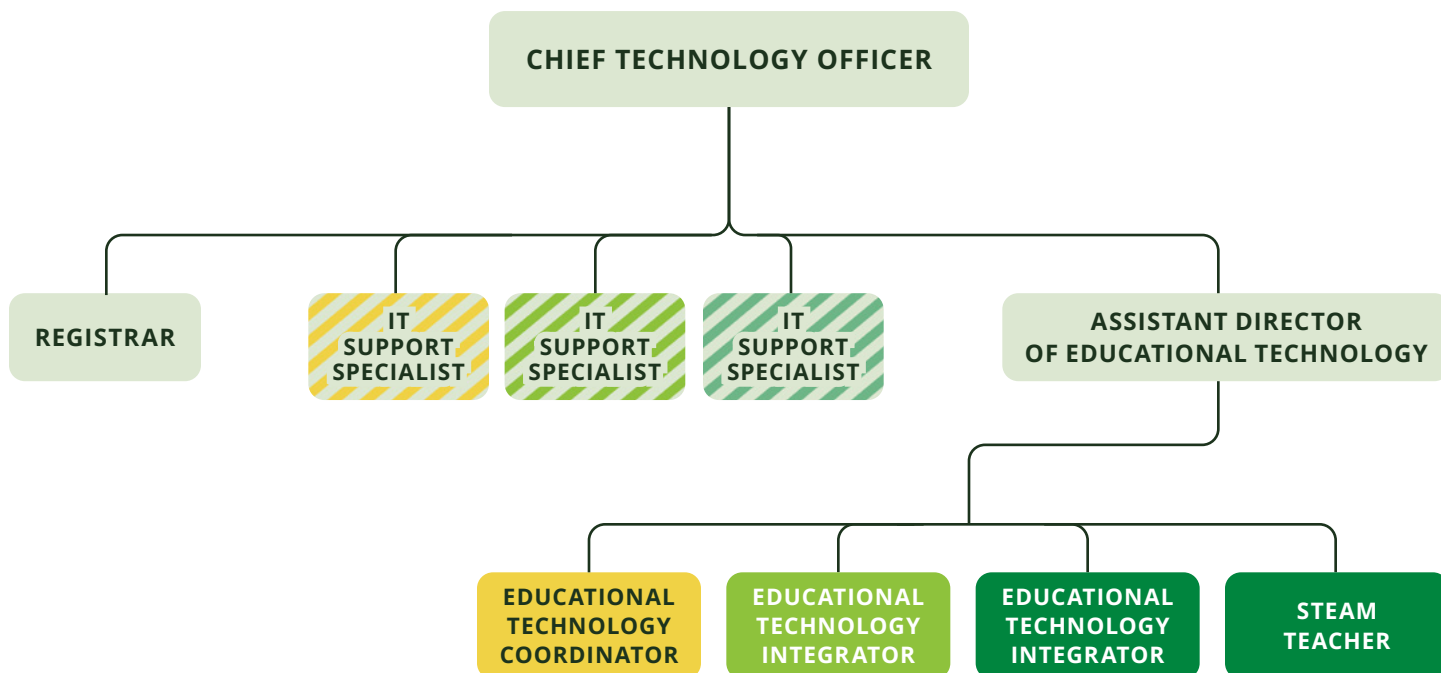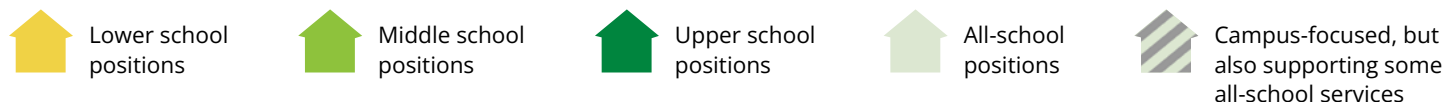Brooklyn, NY 11201

MMFS is located in the heart of Brooklyn, a culturally diverse borough of New York US City. The three school campuses are on residential streets not far from vibrant neighborhoods lined with shops and restaurants. Many administrators routinely travel to multiple campuses on the same day, particularly those like the CTO that have oversight of all-school programs. Most common methods of transport include walking, biking, or using the school's ride-share corporate contract. The CTO and registrar are based at the lower school campus, where the head's office, business office, and many other central-service departments are also located. The other two campuses have limited space and require creative approaches to carving out shared-work environments for colleagues visiting from other campuses.

Inside the Department

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                    CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

REGISTRAR    IT          IT          IT        ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
             SUPPORT     SUPPORT     SUPPORT   OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY
             SPECIALIST  SPECIALIST  SPECIALIST

                    EDUCATIONAL    EDUCATIONAL    EDUCATIONAL    STEAM
                    TECHNOLOGY     TECHNOLOGY     TECHNOLOGY     TEACHER
                    COORDINATOR    INTEGRATOR     INTEGRATOR
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Key

Lower school positions	Middle school positions	Upper school positions	All-school positions	Campus-focused, but also supporting some all-school services

The technology department at MMFS comprises nine full-time employees. On each of the school's three campuses is an IT support specialist and an educational technology professional. The three IT support specialists report directly to the CTO. They have campus-specific responsibilities to monitor and support daily operations, but they also have separate areas of all-school tech focus behind the scenes. The three educational technology professionals report to the assistant director of educational technology, who stepped into this new role a couple of years ago to provide K-12 continuity for the instructional technology program and curriculum. The registrar, who primarily oversees the school's SIS environment (Veracross), also reports directly to the CTO.

A key element of the CTO's job is to oversee the work of the entire department while providing hands-on IT and infrastructure support. The school does not have an MSP nor a network administrator. Thus, the CTO needs to be able to provide networking and infrastructure administration to complement the IT team's skills and knowledge-base. The new CTO will also have the opportunity to evaluate team structure and possibly explore other organizational models. Along with the assistant director of educational technology who is primarily responsible for technology instruction and integration, the CTO works in close collaboration with the associate head of school to ensure consistency and strategic alignment between the technology and academic programs.

Background & Narrative

Nestled in the heart of Brooklyn, Mary McDowell Friends School (MMFS) is a K-12 college preparatory program dedicated to the success of students with learning disabilities. Guided by the Quaker values of equality, integrity, and social responsibility, MMFS fosters a diverse and inclusive community where all students can reach their full potential. The school employs specialized teaching methodologies and challenging curricula to empower students as academic achievers, creative thinkers, and contributing members of a global society. MMFS is also deeply committed to equity and anti-racism. The school proudly blends Quaker values with modern educational practices to nurture a culture of collaboration, growth, and innovation.

This is a pivotal and forward-looking moment in the school's history. MMFS recently welcomed André Del Valle as its new head of school at the start of the 2023-2024 school year, marking the first change in headship in over 30 years. This fall, the school will begin a strategic planning process to shape the next several years of its program and infrastructure. MMFS operates three distinct sites in Brooklyn: the middle and upper school buildings are leased from the local Catholic Archdiocese, while the lower school campus is owned outright. Following the strategic planning process that is scheduled to wrap up by the fall of 2025, the school will likely explore options to acquire a permanent campus for its middle and upper schools, or both. In the meantime, managing technology across spaces that are both owned and leased will require an adaptive and nuanced approach to IT infrastructure deployment, installations, and improvement.

At MMFS, technology is more than just a tool; it is an integral part of the educational experience. Over the past decade, the school has implemented several innovative programs to support student learning, including a 1:1 Chromebook initiative, a BYOD policy, Google Apps for Education, and various assistive technologies. The technology department is fully staffed and highly engaged in the life of the school. Following a successful thirteen year tenure of the previous CTO, the school put in place an interim leadership model for the 24-25 year—so that a thoughtful and intentional hiring process can occur this fall in advance of the next permanent CTO starting on or around July 1, 2025.

The CTO is a highly visible role that is tasked with building close relationships with different department directors, the leadership team of each campus, and the overall school leadership. The CTO has to be strategic, enterprise-minded, and technically skilled. At the same time, given the school's focus on educating students with learning disabilities, and the school's unwavering commitment to DEIB and anti-racism, it's essential that the next CTO also be mission-driven, culturally competent, and willing to become actively involved in the MMFS community.

With this upcoming hire, the evolution of the technology department will continue: the next CTO will report directly to the head of school. A significant aspect of this role will involve evaluating the current structure of the department, complementing existing skill sets, and considering how to optimize staffing and structures for long-term sustainability and success. This will include building close, supportive relationships with team members and providing individualized opportunities for professional growth and development that align with the department's broader goals.

The ideal CTO is mission-driven, community-oriented, and ready to take a hands-on approach to leadership. This is not a rebuilding situation—technology at MMFS is in very good shape—but rather an opportunity to leverage an outstanding foundation while guiding the department and the school into the future. The CTO will need to balance strategic vision with day-to-day management, ensuring that the technology department not only meets the current needs of the school but also anticipates and prepares for future opportunities. Reporting directly to the head of school, the new CTO will begin in the summer of 2025 and play a pivotal role as the school begins to implement aspects of its new strategic plan, develop long-term plans for its physical campus sites, and enter an exciting new chapter as it celebrates 40 years of growth and success.

André joined MMFS as its fourth Head of School in 2023. Prior to MMFS, André built his reputation as a dynamic community builder and educational innovator as Head of School at George Jackson Academy, an independent middle school for academically-talented boys from underserved communities. After his successful tenure at George Jackson, André took the opportunity to become Head of Middle School at Poly Prep Country Day, where he led a large and diverse division at one of New York City's leading independent schools, managing students and families, faculty and staff, and budgets and development. He holds master's degrees in both teaching and educational administration and leadership from Pace University.

André Del Valle
HEAD OF SCHOOL

We invite you to **watch this interview** in which André discusses the vital role of the CTO position at MMFS.

Duties

Technology Operations

- Manage the school's technology infrastructure, including data management systems, network architecture, and IT support services.
- Maintain accountability for cybersecurity defenses and data protection strategies, facilitating continuous improvement of security protocols and practices in collaboration with external consultants and service providers.
- Develop and oversee IT policies and procedures to ensure the security of the school's digital assets and compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- Act as a liaison with technology vendors and service providers, negotiating contracts and managing partnerships.

Strategic Leadership

- In partnership with the assistant director of educational technology, who reports to the CTO, define and communicate a clear vision for integrating technology into all facets of a school that supports students with learning disabilities.
- Serve in a project management and consultative capacity for large-scale technology initiatives, both within the department and across the entire school.
- Evaluate and integrate new technologies to continuously improve the school's technological landscape.
- Collaborate with senior leadership and key stakeholders to align technology initiatives, policies, and services to the needs of each campus and various all-school departments.
- Develop and lead technology training programs for faculty and staff.

Departmental Administration

- Lead and manage the IT department, including a nine-person team that is dedicated and hardworking, and currently does not have a role dedicated to all-school network management or administration.
- Oversee the recruitment, development, and retention of the technology professionals at MMFS, and provide team members with growth opportunities to enhance and expand their skills, knowledge, and areas of focus.
- In partnership with the CFO, oversee the allocation and management of the technology budget, ensuring effective use of resources.
- Report directly to the head of school and perform other duties as assigned.

A COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND HYBRID FLEXIBILITY

As a three-campus environment supporting a unique population of learners, Mary McDowell Friends School is a professional community that values and requires in-person collaboration. At the same time, the senior leadership at Mary McDowell Friends School recognizes the need to create work policies that allow for logistical flexibility to the extent possible for individual employees. To that end, for many years the school has supported hybrid arrangements involving periods of remote work during the summer and other major holiday breaks. This school year, the school is going one step further, by exploring a trial policy of providing some administrators with a bank of 20 remote-work days to be used during periods of school operations. An essential element of all these policies is ensuring that the student, faculty, and community experiences are not adversely impacted, and that policies are fair and reasonable for everyone involved. At the end of the 24-25 school year, school leadership will be evaluating and potentially adjusting it in advance of the 25-26 school year, when the CTO will start.

Qualifications & Qualities

Qualifications

- Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with advanced coursework in information systems or a related field desirable
- A deep understanding of diversity practices and a commitment to fostering culturally competent and anti-racist work environments
- A minimum of seven years of experience leading technology departments and supervising technology employees
- Hands-on experience managing and administering major components of an IT/IS program in an enterprise organization, preferably in an educational or nonprofit setting
- Experience leading organizational change and implementing staff development initiatives in alignment with a strategic vision
- Experience designing and implementing technology infrastructure for new buildings, in addition to retrofitting existing infrastructure

Qualities

- A desire to be an integral member of a school community that serves students with learning disabilities and is grounded in Quaker values
- A multitasking approach to planning and overseeing concurrent technology-related programs and projects, combined with outstanding motivational skills to ensure completion and success
- Excellent leadership and communication skills, with the ability to manage and inspire a diverse team of technology professionals that works across three physically disconnected sites
- A collaborative, cooperative, empathetic, collegial, innovative, and patient mindset
- A thoughtful but determined approach to departmental objectives and individual staff growth while remaining attuned to the school's mission, values, and goals
- An understanding of the diverse technology needs and organizational complexities of a multidivisional, multicampus independent school
- An eagerness to examine administrative practice through the lens of race, identity, equity, and privilege
- Commitment to a school culture that allows for social identities to feel welcome
- A willingness to participate in the daily operations of an independent school, which can include evening and weekend work

How to Apply

Applications submitted by **November 1, 2024** will receive priority review.

All applications must be submitted online:

www.EdTechRecruiting.com/jobs/MMFS/CTO

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to the Mary McDowell Friend's School search committee

- CV or resume

- 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)

- A response to the following prompt:

  > *If you were invited to move forward in this search, what preliminary questions would you have regarding either the CTO role or MMFS—the answers to which would help you determine if this is the right opportunity for you at this point in your career?*

12M RECRUITING

RETAINED SEARCHES FOR
MISSION-DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONS

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