



# The Oakridge School

Lower School Head  
July 2010

## AT A GLANCE

**School Type:** Independent, college preparatory, non-sectarian, non-profit, co-educational day school for grades preschool through 12

**Founded:** 1979; first graduating class – 1985; alumni – 993

**Enrollment:**

Early Childhood (PS-K): 112  
Lower School (1 - 4): 209  
Middle School (5 - 8): 255  
Upper School (9-12): 301

**Faculty:** 87 full-time; 8 part-time; over 50% hold advanced degrees, 5 have their Ph. D.

**Average Class Size:**

Student teacher ratio = 10:1  
Upper School: 16  
Middle School: 18  
Lower School: 19  
Early Childhood: 13

**Tuition:**

Preschool (3 day): \$5,460  
Preschool (5 day): \$8,900  
PreK: \$8,900  
Kindergarten: \$10,180  
Grades 1-4: \$13,480  
Grades 5-8: \$14,830  
Grades 9-12: \$15,360

The Oakridge School invites nominations and applications for its position of Lower School Head. The position begins with the 2010-2011 school year.

## The School

Located in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, in the growing residential and business city of Arlington, TX, The Oakridge School enrolls 877 students in Preschool through Grade 12. An independent, co-educational, college preparatory day school, The Oakridge School currently seeks a Head of Lower School to begin responsibilities July 1, 2010. The Lower School Head is responsible for day-to-day operations for 25 faculty members and 209 students in Grades 1 - 4.

Founded in 1979 with 85 students, the school's growth has been extraordinary. Its mission is clear:

*To inspire students to seek their full potential in academics, the arts, and athletics in a challenging and nurturing environment that cultivates social responsibility, mutual respect, and personal integrity.*

Oakridge is accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest and holds membership in the National Association of Independent Schools, the Texas Association of Non-Public Schools, Texas Independent School Consortium, and the College Board. Oakridge is governed by an independent Board of Regents.

Beyond the strength of its academic programs and faculty, two significant forces have contributed to the success of the school – continuity of leadership and the tremendous support of its families. The current Head of School, Jonathan Kellam, was appointed to his position in 2007 after having successfully served as an Oakridge teacher and administrator since 1993. Jon followed Andy J. Broadus, who was appointed the President of The Oakridge School in 2007. Andy served the school as Headmaster from 1981-2007.

*“The school provides a similar educational environment that I grew up with living in a small community. There is a sense of family and commitment to a common goal, that of providing the best educational opportunities.”* Parent



The current Lower School Head, Corliss Elsesser, was an integral member of the school’s founding team. Along with Andy Broadus, the Board, the teachers, and the families of the young school, she joined forces to bring the vision of Oakridge into reality. Rolling up their sleeves, these visionaries organized and provided the sweat equity to move the school from its modest church-facility beginnings to a more permanent location. They all contributed supplies, personal resources, and manpower to bring their dream of The Oakridge School to fruition. While those times are considerably removed from the beautiful facilities and resources that Oakridge enjoys today, that same spirit remains: Oakridge is a school community whose people are united and committed to the success and education of its children.

As Oakridge faces its Lower School administrative transition, it understands fully that it must continue to be that special place where people enjoy the trust of its members; the lively interaction of constituencies; the sensitivity of its administration, faculty and staff; and an environment where students strive for their very best. While “family like” in feel, the community is made up of a diverse student population. Parents from thirty-two cities and twelve foreign countries place their confidence for the education and care of their children with the school’s experienced faculty and staff. Attrition for faculty is minimal, generally less than five percent.

### The Lower School

The Oakridge Lower School is comprised of Grades 1 through 4. Its classrooms are located on the first floor in one of the school’s main academic buildings, which also houses classrooms and resources for the Middle School on the second floor. The Lower School offers bright, cheerful classrooms and facilities for art, music, computers, and assemblies. It maintains a low student to teacher ratio. Grades 1 and 2 have a maximum of 19 students per classroom, and Grades 3 and 4 are limited to 20 children per section.

Positive reinforcement and high expectations are basics in the Lower School as students are nurtured yet encouraged to take risks and strive for their very best in superior academic and enrichment programs. In addition to the mastery of basic skills in academic areas, children are encouraged to become problem solvers. Critical thinking skills are developed with the goal of helping the children become successful, lifelong learners.

With little turnover in faculty (the average tenure is 14 years) and students, people feel a comfortable connection to Oakridge. The result is a division with a great sense of loyalty. In addition to grade level teachers, there are specialist teachers in art, music, Spanish, computer, physical education, math enrichment, science enrichment, and reading enrichment. The specialists and classroom teachers work closely together to present a truly integrated curriculum. Great care is taken to provide a learning environment where a variety of teaching methods is used. There is an emphasis on hands-on experiences that allow students to be truly active learners.

*“The school’s faculty members are of the highest quality, and they appear very unified. The new Lower School Head should strive to maintain the excellence the school already has achieved.”* Parent



First and second grades are self-contained classrooms with the exception of their enrichment classes. In third and fourth grades, students rotate among the grade level teachers for instruction in social studies, science and math. Math enrichment classes are also available for students in grades one through four who require additional math challenges.

Furthering the school’s commitment to active learning, Lower School students participate in field trips to museums, concerts, history and science based locations, and other curricular related destinations. For 20 years, students have enjoyed a three-week Living History program that provides students in-depth studies of Native Americans, Mountain Men, and Civil War figures, culminating in a Living History overnight in the gym. Student participation in musical productions, plays, art shows, field days, and community service activities helps round out the busy, exciting offerings.

The Lower School is viewed as one of Oakridge’s major assets. In a recent survey of Lower School parents, the following were cited as four significant strengths:

- Excellence of academic program
- Small class size/personal attention
- Emphasis on values
- Quality of the Lower School faculty

### **New Leadership**

In searching for the next Head of Lower School, Oakridge seeks an exceptional educator/leader who truly loves being in a school and working with students and faculty. Among specific expectations for the new Head of Lower School:

- Strong academic and professional preparation with an advanced degree
- Extensive teaching and administrative experience (preferably at another college preparatory independent school) with the age and grade levels served by the Lower School
- A strong commitment to the school’s child-centered environment and mission
- An inviting personality with a sense of humor, high energy, and genuine concern
- A person who is open minded and encourages creativity
- A thoughtful educator who is highly knowledgeable about cutting edge curriculum and instruction
- A person who will attract faculty and families to the school
- A person who inspires professionalism from faculty and pride and responsibility from children
- A team player and people person who will enjoy easy interactions with colleagues, students, parents and faculty
- A perceptive listener and problem solver who is visible and available



## Application

The school requests that interested candidates submit by October 31, 2009 a resume, letter of interest, list of references with contact information, and a personal statement of educational philosophy to:

**The Oakridge Lower School Head Search  
The Education Group**

5952 Royal Lane, Suite 161 • Dallas, TX 75230

800-369-9102 • FAX 214-369-4979

[services@educationgroup.com](mailto:services@educationgroup.com)

Materials will be evaluated as received. It is anticipated that a decision will be made by the first of the calendar year. Responsibilities will begin July 1, 2010. Salary and benefits are competitive and commensurate with experience.



*The Oakridge School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national and ethnic origin in hiring, admissions, or implementation of policies and programs.*