



Upper School Head
Kingswood Oxford—West Hartford, CT
July 2023

OVERVIEW

Kingswood Oxford, familiarly KO, is a coeducational, college preparatory, independent private day school for talented and motivated students in grades 6-12, located in West Hartford, Connecticut. Accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges, KO values academic and co-curricular excellence and meaningful relationships with students and their families. KO's enrollment in the 2022-23 academic year is 501 students from 60-plus towns in Connecticut and western Massachusetts. Committed to diversity and inclusion, 33 percent of KO's student population are students of color. KO also welcomes a small number of academically qualified students from other countries who reside with host families from the local community.

Kingswood Oxford's story begins in 1909, with the opening of the all-girls Oxford School – one of Connecticut's first independent day schools for girls. Meanwhile, a group of prominent Hartford families, looking to secure tutoring for their sons, recruited a former teacher from the Kingswood School in Bath, England, who established the Kingswood School here in Connecticut in 1916. In order to create a quality experience for students in a co-educational setting, the two schools merged in 1969 to form the present-day Kingswood Oxford School.

A KO education empowers students to become their best selves intellectually, socially, and emotionally by providing a rich and rigorous academic curriculum, competitive sports, and extracurricular activities that inspire students to grow into their potential. Exceptional learning is based on strong relationships between the students and their teachers. At KO, students take ownership of their learning and are willing to take risks because they are supported every day by teachers who know them. This encouragement and steady guidance allow students to self-advocate, forge their own paths, and develop their own points of view. KO graduates are well-prepared for the challenges of college and go on to lead meaningful lives of integrity and involvement.

Strategic Vision

Kingswood Oxford is a transformative day school that engages students in real-world and interdisciplinary learning opportunities by expanding the classroom beyond our campus and partnering with people and institutions in the Greater Hartford area. Our signature educational approach develops compassionate collaborators, ethical problem solvers, and active citizens who lead and serve in the wider community.



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POSITION SUMMARY

Kingswood Oxford seeks an enthusiastic, experienced independent school leader to serve as Head of the Upper School and to work in partnership with the Head of School, the Senior Leadership Team, the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Upper School department chairs and faculty. The successful candidate will have experience as a strategic thinker, visionary, and educator, as well as embrace a bias toward action. They will thrive in a school community that values the whole student, strong relationships, and collaborative problem-solving. The Head of the Upper School will build community while leading through change as KO grows into the Strategic Vision. The right candidate will support KO's mission and traditions, providing vision and direction to the faculty, students, and parents of the Upper School while stimulating continued program improvement and innovation. This is an opportunity to lead a high-performing Upper School while thinking aspirationally about the future of the School.

The Head of the Upper School will supervise the Upper School Dean of Students, Director of Academic Planning, Director of College Counseling, an Administrative Coordinator, the Director of Teaching and Learning, department chairs, and 63 teachers. Together they deliver an exceptional education to the 356 students in the Upper School. The Head of the Upper School reports directly to the Head of School.



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STRENGTHS OF THE UPPER SCHOOL

The KO motto, *Vincit qui se vincit*, or, One conquers by conquering oneself, is woven throughout the seven-year journey from Upper Prep (grade 6) through Form 6 (grade 12). This motto informs and guides all aspects of student, faculty and community life as do KO's Core Values. For instance, one value embedded in the life of the school is to "care beyond self." Members of the community continually look beyond their own circumstances with the goal of helping others. Teachers take advising seriously and connect naturally with students. There is unwavering faith in student potential. New faculty speak of the tremendous support from colleagues, just as new students are brought into the fold quickly.

Leading experts from a variety of disciplines visit KO to work with students. These visiting artists, writers, scientists, Broadway performers, professional choreographers, and industry leaders – who are at the top of their respective fields – share their passion and knowledge via performances, lectures, workshops and master classes. Examples of these signature programs include the Goodman Banks Visiting Artist Series, the Stroud Science Symposium, the Margaret E. Henry & Henry R. Roberts Center for Leadership Lunch and Lead Series, and the Warren Baird English Symposium (in its 40th year), which has brought acclaimed authors such as E. L. Doctorow, Tony Kushner, Arthur Miller, Tim O'Brien, Joyce Carol Oates, and Colson Whitehead (pictured below) to work with KO students. As a result of the curriculum and these programs, KO students master the art of communication in all of its forms: the school prides itself on creating skilled writers and adept speakers.



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Creative Arts are fully embedded in the curriculum. As KO students explore both traditional and emerging art forms through media and visual arts, music, and theater, they develop the confidence in their ability to express themselves, the courage to try new things, and the ability to collaborate with others. Students connect with Broadway performers, work with professional choreographers, and have won Best Musical the last two years in a row at the Halo High School Theater Awards.

A hallmark of a KO education is student participation in co-curricular activities, which support students in taking risks, being a part of a group working towards a common goal, and building student confidence. KO has a rich athletic tradition, supporting a commitment to life-long fitness. Students participate in athletics year-round, selecting from more than 55 options including interscholastic, intramural, and coed teams. The only day school member of the prestigious Founder's League, each year, a number of KO athletes continue to play their sport at the collegiate level. Recently, KO has pioneered a successful ESports team.

Outside of the classroom, students explore varied areas of interest through 50+ clubs, programs, and activities that meet during the school day, after school and/or on weekends, including The KO News, Model United Nations, Mock Trial, and the Forensic Union.

With a commitment to diversity, inclusivity, developing cultural competency, and learning from intergroup dialogue, KO wants students to be committed to honesty and justice, to acknowledge the impact of power and privilege, and to push for positive change. From affinity groups to regular DEI-focused professional development, students, faculty, and staff lean into growth.



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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Head of the Upper School will be a strong decision maker, a good listener, an empathetic problem-solver, and a clear communicator. KO is, above all else, a community, and the Head of the Upper School will interact with all constituencies (teachers, students and parents) on a daily basis.

Curricular Leadership and Innovation

The next Head of the Upper School will have an opportunity to lead a talented and committed faculty to achieve a vision that calls upon the Head of the Upper School to lead “a transformative day school that engages students in real-world and interdisciplinary learning opportunities by expanding the classroom beyond our campus and partnering with people and institutions in the Greater Hartford area.” The next Head of the Upper School will be a systems thinker who creates structures to support academic innovation while maintaining KO’s core strengths through trust, relationship, and consensus building.

With this in mind, it is important that the next Head of the Upper School have experience working with leadership and faculty to conceive and implement curricular, pedagogical, and programmatic change as the School examines its curriculum, the role of APs, and explores additional opportunities for student learning such as interdisciplinary studies and experiential and service learning opportunities. The next Head of the Upper School will lead the faculty through these initiatives while continuing to honor KO’s tradition of academic excellence.



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Attract, Recruit, and Retain Excellent Teachers

The School's greatest assets are the skilled adults who provide an excellent education for the whole student through teaching, coaching, and advising. The next Head of the Upper School will support the faculty through challenges, such as launching a new schedule or clarifying and strengthening structures, protocols and oversight. This also includes hiring and retaining excellent new teachers.

Foster Student Life and Wellness

The School is looking for an educational leader who will team with the Dean of Students and the Director of Wellness to build upon our programming for student life and wellness to foster student experiences, student leadership, school spirit, and life skills.

Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Goals

KO believes that a diverse and inclusive school community are essential components of a successful learning environment, nurturing students to become actively engaged in the wider community, inquire about the inequities they encounter and seek out opportunities to build a more just society. The Head of the Upper School will partner with the Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging to foster a culture that attracts, retains and supports diverse and well-qualified staff and faculty, and teaches students to be global citizens in a diverse world.



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WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The Kingswood Oxford campus is located on 33 acres in the center of West Hartford, Connecticut – a thriving community known for its culture, entertainment, and family environment. West Hartford was named as one of the nation’s “[Best Places to Live](#)” by [Money magazine](#). Located next to the state capital of Hartford, residents are able to enjoy all the benefits of the city, including restaurants, museums, nationally touring entertainers and a minor league baseball team. And the Money magazine article states, “West Hartford’s own attractions include a bustling downtown shopping district, restaurants and bars, hiking trails, and the majority of the 101-acre Elizabeth Park, known locally for its rose gardens.”

QUALIFICATIONS

Kingswood Oxford School is seeking:

- An experienced educational leader, though not necessarily a sitting Head of the Upper School, who values all facets of a student’s education, including athletics, the arts, and experiential learning with an eagerness to be present.
- An educator who believes in the potential of all students, faculty, and staff and maintains the school’s commitment to academic excellence.
- A collaborator who leverages the talent and insight of experienced administrators, faculty, and staff to benefit the School and its students through being approachable, responsive, and transparent.
- A leader experienced in recruiting, hiring, retaining, supporting, and leading a talented, committed, mission-aligned faculty.
- A disposition which embraces change and a proven capacity to lead groups through reflection, growth, and progress.
- A navigator of the ambiguous and complex, a strategic thinker and empathetic problem solver who can work with faculty, staff, students, and parents using tact, flexibility, and compassion.
- A culturally competent leader with a demonstrated commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and equity as important pillars of a community.
- An organized and technologically savvy person with exceptional written and oral communication skills, able to manage a busy division with many moving parts and delegate as necessary.
- Bachelor’s degree; Master’s degree in subject area or educational leadership preferred.

TO APPLY

Please send resume/CV, letter of intent, list of five references with contact information (references will not be contacted until the candidate is notified), and statement of philosophy of education and leadership to John Faubert (jpf@carneysandoe.com) and Namita Bhattacharya (namita@carneysandoe.com). **Please do not contact the school directly.**



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