

RG 175

Change as Opportunity

HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL SEARCH

THE SEVEN HILLS SCHOOL
Cincinnati, Ohio

THE
SEVEN
HILLS
SCHOOL

APPLICATION DEADLINE

November 15, 2017

Those interested in being considered for the Head of Lower School position at the Doherty campus should submit a letter of interest, a *curriculum vitae*, and a writing sample (in that order) in a single PDF file, should be emailed to:

John S. Farber
jfarber@rg175.com



THE PLACE

Imagine a school where students *truly* love to learn. Where they learn by exploring: asking questions, gathering information, making inferences.

Imagine a school where teachers *really* strive to cultivate each child's unique potential. Where students are celebrated for who they are and what makes them unique.

Imagine a school where students work *together*. Where learning is collaborative and engaging and fun.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Now imagine *leading* that school. Where children come, each morning, eager and excited; committed and kind. A passionate faculty, dedicated to best practice and keen to learn and share.

Imagine colleagues who challenge and inspire you. Parents who appreciate your efforts and value your expertise.

Imagine a warm, inclusive Lower School division, on its own intimate campus, but with all of the resources of a larger school community.

To learn more about
Seven Hills School:
www.7hills.org



THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The Doherty School is a Lower School community, serving 165 students from two years old through grade 5. It is one of the two Lower School divisions of The Seven Hills School in Cincinnati, Ohio, a school of approximately 1,000 students that is one of the premier independent schools in the Midwest.

The Seven Hills School has two campuses, approximately 15 minutes apart. The 7-acre Doherty campus is home to one of the Lower School divisions. The 42-acre Hilldale campus houses the Lotspeich School, Seven Hills' other Lower School (PreK2 - 5) division, as well as the Middle School (grades 6 - 8) and the Upper School (grades 9-12).

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Seven Hills' educational philosophy is encapsulated in five touchstone documents.

The school *Mission Statement* expresses the school's commitment to teaching the whole child and to using engaging, future-focused pedagogies.

"Seven Hills engages hearts and minds, challenging students to develop their unique capacities and preparing each for a meaningful role in a rapidly changing world."

The *Statement of Educational Philosophy* spells out how that mission is achieved. The *Portrait of a Graduate* and the *Seven Hills Values Statement* describe some of the habits of mind and heart that the school seeks to cultivate in its students while the *Seven Hills Method* delineates some of the teaching methods that best promote those outcomes. (See school website www.7hills.org/about/)

SCHOOL CULTURE

Seven Hills is deeply committed to growth and development and to lifelong learning, not only for our students, but for our entire school family. Accordingly, the

school commits considerable resources to the professional growth and development of the faculty and to our signature Curriculum Development Grant Program, which incentivizes collaborative program planning and curricular innovation.

THE DOHERTY CAMPUS

The Doherty School campus is situated in historic East Walnut Hills, Ohio, a "first suburb" of Cincinnati, and consists of four charming buildings in one of Cincinnati's most beautiful neighborhoods.

In addition to two well-equipped classroom buildings, the Doherty campus has its own library, science laboratories, computer rooms, maker space, art, music, and drama classrooms, gymnasium, playgrounds, playing fields, and cafeteria.

THE DOHERTY FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION

The Doherty School campus has its own dedicated faculty, including not only 18 classroom teachers, but also 8 subject specialists in art, music, drama, Spanish, library, guidance, and physical education as well as its own learning specialist and guidance counselor.

Each grade level has a faculty leader, and these leaders, along with the Head of Lower School, the Director of Program, and the Guidance Counselor, form the leadership team for the Doherty campus.

DOHERTY PROGRAM AND PEDAGOGY

Administratively, the Doherty School is divided into four teams. The Early Childhood team serves students in PreK2 through Kindergarten. Unit 1 consists of two sections of first grade. After first grade, the Doherty Lower School uses mixed-age grouping, combining the second and third grades in Unit 2 and the fourth and fifth grades in Unit 3. This structure enables the faculty to differentiate instruction by aggregating students in grades 2 through 5, by skill level, in different subjects.

The Early Childhood team launches students on the critical first steps of their educational journey, fostering each child's unique academic abilities as well as his or her social and emotional



development. By participating in a lively classroom environment that balances personal attention and independence, our students learn to ask questions, explore new interests, and work happily together. Students feel loved and cared for in a safe environment where they are free to discover how fun and fulfilling learning can be.

In Units 1 through 3 (grades one through five), as students move from learning to read to reading to learn, the program becomes increasingly exploratory. Students learn to read for meaning and for information. In science and social studies, inquiry projects engage them in asking provocative questions and in gathering, sorting, and interpreting relevant information. Students have many opportunities to work together on project teams and to present what they have learned in a variety of media.

Because social and cognitive learning are so interrelated, students are often asked to reflect on their own learning. In their homeroom and guidance

classes, they are trained to welcome challenges and to recover from setbacks. And because students learn best when they relate personally to the subject matter, the Doherty faculty tries to teach, as much as possible, through direct experience, asking students to explore their feelings as they complete inquiry projects and work together to solve problems. In all of their learning activities, students are encouraged to draw connections and to respond emotionally to new concepts.

Woven throughout Seven Hills' PK-12 curriculum, eight signature programs represent a distinctive and innovative approach that engages students and prepares them, in age appropriate ways, not only for college, but for life. As they move through the school, students dive deeper into their own interests, honing their critical and creative thinking skills, and discovering more about themselves and the world around them. (See website: www.7hills.org/signature-programs/)

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The last several years have been a time of rapid growth and development for Seven Hills as a whole and for the Doherty Lower School in particular. The school has a talented faculty, a strong, innovative program, and ample, well-designed facilities to support student learning. That said, the new Head of the Lower School at the Doherty campus will face significant challenges and opportunities in the years ahead.

- The new Head will follow a retiring school leader with a long and productive tenure at Doherty. While we expect that the new Head will honor the school's history and traditions, this is an exciting opportunity for a strong new leader to bring a fresh perspective.
- Seven Hills operates two strong Lower School divisions on two different campuses. The next Head of Lower School at Doherty will have an opportunity to work alongside the Head of Lower School at Lotspeich to coordinate the two Lower School programs even more closely.



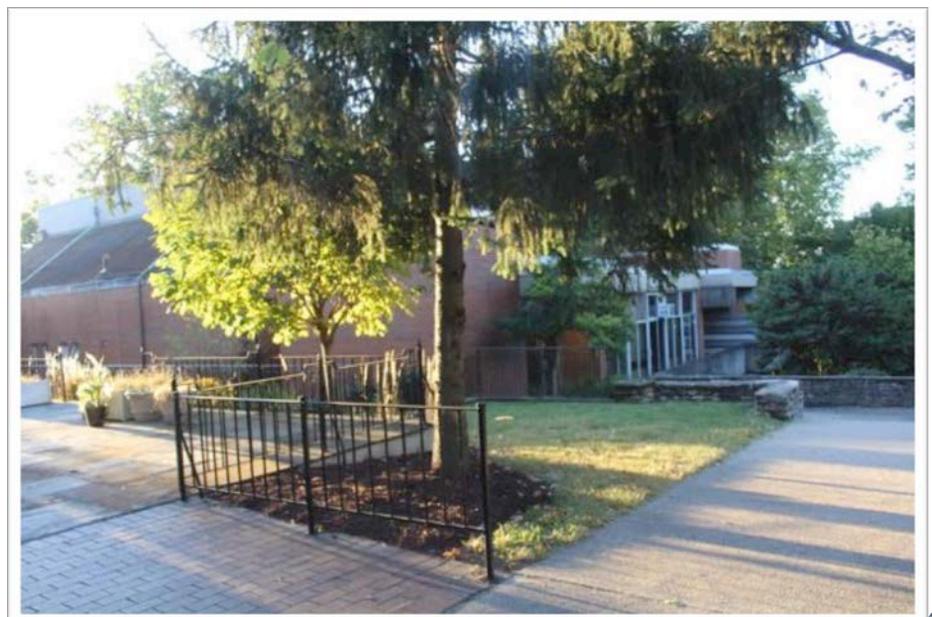
DOHERTY SPECIALS

To enrich the curriculum, Doherty offers specials classes in art, music, drama, physical education, science, Spanish, guidance, and library/research/technology skills, each taught by subject specialists in dedicated learning spaces. In each of these areas, there are frequent opportunities for students to showcase their emerging skills.

A new feature on the Doherty campus is a maker space called the *Creation Studio*, a learning environment rich with possibility. It facilitates hands-on, exploratory experiences that engage students in designing, experimenting, building and inventing at the intersection of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics. Activities include the deconstruction zone, invention zone, coding zone, circuit zone, and 3-D printing.

ATHLETICS

More than 80% of Seven Hills' students, from first grade on, play on at least one athletic team. In the early years, the program emphasizes participation, skill building, and sportsmanship, consistent with the school's values. To expand their social horizons, Doherty students are paired with their peers from Lotspeich, our other Lower School division, on grade-level athletic teams.



- The mixed-age grouping in grades two through five is a unique feature of the Doherty School. One challenge for the new Head will be to find ways to articulate the unique benefits of this approach while leading the faculty in evaluating possible modifications in the future.
- In recent years, like many independent schools, Seven Hills has experienced enrollment challenges in its Lower Schools. The next Head will have the opportunity to make an early and important impact on enrollment strategy.
- The next Head must earn the respect and admiration of Doherty faculty and staff, sustaining and building upon a culture that supports their growth and development, both as individuals and as members of a high functioning team.
- The new Head will need to find ways to improve communication both between teachers and individual families, and between the school leadership and the parent body as a whole.



QUALITIES SOUGHT

The next Head of Lower School at Doherty must have a strong background in early childhood and elementary school education and significant experience coordinating a rigorous and innovative curriculum. He/she will be available to teachers and students and enjoy working with both. He/she must be able to work productively with parents with high expectations. He/she will have the energy to arrive early and stay late and the vision and imagination to keep moving the school forward.

The next Head of the Lower School at Doherty must demonstrate leadership, integrity, responsiveness, compassion, empathy, humor, joy and delight.

Ultimately, the next Head must be someone who will get Doherty and love it!

Our new Head will work alongside three other wise, experienced division heads as part of the school's senior administrative team. A major priority will be to coordinate the Doherty program as fully as possible with the other Lower School at Lotspeich. However, because of the Doherty campus' physical separation from the Hillsdale campus, this position is an opportunity to oversee a small, separate Lower School program and faculty, in effect, a school within a school.