



Krieger Schechter Day School

Baltimore, MD

Head of School

for July 2012

The School:

Krieger Schechter Day School (www.ksds.edu), a K-8 Jewish Day School located in Pikesville, MD, just outside Baltimore, seeks a new head of school to begin July 2012. Krieger Schechter (KSDS), founded in 1981, is a member of the Association of Independent Maryland & DC Schools (AIMS) and serves 365 students; the school operates under the auspices of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation, a large and active Conservative synagogue. The school and congregation share a spacious 35-acre campus.

The school has been served by one head of school who began in his role a year after the school's founding. The school's warm and positive community and the respect given to its professionals engender strong loyalty and remarkable tenures from its teaching staff; while the average faculty tenure is 12 years, 20 faculty and staff have worked at Krieger Schechter for over twenty years. Krieger Schechter has a stellar reputation for its strong preparation of its students who are well challenged by its general and Judaic studies curricula and successful Hebrew language instruction.

Krieger Schechter seeks an energetic educational leader as its next head of school. This person will partner with Chizuk Amuno's rabbinical leaders, the school's Board, senior administrative team, and faculty to enhance the school's many strengths and ensure a relevant, successful program for the current and next generation of students.

The Mission & Origin:

KSDS provides an unparalleled Jewish and general studies education enabling its students to become confident, successful and valued members of society as committed and knowledgeable Jews.

Krieger Schechter is affiliated with the Schechter Day School Network which arose in the 1960s in the hope of providing day schools that would educate children in accordance with the teachings of Conservative Judaism. The Solomon Schechter Day School Network has more than fifty schools. Krieger Schechter Day School was named in recognition of its major benefactor.

School Structure and Organization:

Krieger Schechter is divided into two divisions with the lower school serving students in grades K-4 and the middle school serving students in grades 5-8. There are 83 full and part time faculty members, 80% of whom hold advanced degrees.

A Head of Lower School and a Lower School General Studies Head lead the lower school. The middle school is led by an administrative team that includes a Head, Assistant Head, Head of Judaic Studies and Head of Hebrew. The school's senior administrative team also includes a Director of Admissions, Business Manager and a job-share team who serve as co-Directors of Development.

The lower school is equipped for three sections per grade level. Diminished enrollment in recent years has some grade levels currently at two sections (grades 1, 2 and 3). In general, students spend 60% of their week on general studies and 40% on Judaic studies. In the lower school, each grade section has two teachers—one General Studies and the other Judaics. The teachers do not team teach, allowing some teachers to work with more than one grade. Fifth grade is structured to serve as a transition year to middle school. Students in 6th through 8th grades are taught by subject specialists for each discipline. Hebrew is taught in the lower school through a quasi-immersion program as part of the Judaic curriculum. In the middle school, students take Hebrew language class, and dependent on students' proficiency, some Judaic studies classes are taught fully in Hebrew.

Faculty members work hard to integrate and connect the students' learning activities across disciplines. Conversations with faculty highlight that the opportunities to be creative, innovative and trusted are a significant piece of what makes teaching at Krieger Schechter professionally rewarding.

Krieger Schechter's environmentally friendly, "green" campus facility features brightly lit classrooms (each equipped with an interactive white board), an art room, science labs, music room, computer labs, gymnasium, performance spaces, a chapel and access to Chizuk Amuno Congregation's spacious and beautiful sanctuary and museum. The school building also houses a two-story library and media center with more than 25,000 items for student use. The outdoor space includes ball fields and an athletic court. During the summer of 2011, the school devoted significant resources to refurbishing and refreshing some of the school's spaces, offering students updated science labs and a much enhanced middle school wing.

As noted above, Krieger Schechter operates under the auspices of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation. The school serves students across the spectrum of Jewish practice; 40% of the students enrolled at Krieger Schechter are members of Chizuk Amuno.

The synagogue and its educational programs are overseen by the Senior Rabbi, Ron Shulman, who is currently in his eighth year. The Day School Board, comprised of an energetic and committed group of volunteers, works with a strong governance model and utilizes a committee structure. The head of school reports to the synagogue's Senior Rabbi and serves as

a member of his senior administrative team while partnering with and being well supported by the lay leadership of the school's Board.

Krieger Schechter is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland & DC Schools. In addition, the school is a member of the Schechter Day School Network and is affiliated with the Center for Jewish Education of Baltimore. The school is currently completing its AIMS self-study process with the reaccreditation visit scheduled for April 2012.

It is essential to note that Krieger Schechter successfully competes with the strongest independent schools in Baltimore, offering its students a top-notch secular education in addition to a strong Judaic program. Parents emphasize that by choosing Krieger Schechter for their children, they are not compromising their children's secular education in any way but are gaining the value added of strong Judaics and Hebrew language in a tight-knit, value based community.

The professional culture of Krieger Schechter is remarkably positive. Each faculty member, whether new to the school or in his or her 25th year, shared a deep appreciation for the collegial, family-like and respectful culture of the school community. Throughout *Independent Thinking's* visit to the school, we were consistently impressed by the kind, positive, welcoming and good-humored professionals who make up the school's teaching, administrative and support staff. One faculty member shared, believably, "There is truly no whining here."

Opportunities and Challenges:

The next head of Krieger Schechter will have the opportunity to lead a positive school community with a welcoming attitude toward new leadership. He or she will inherit a completed reaccreditation self-study and visiting team report. In addition, the Krieger Schechter Board has prepared a strategic plan that thoughtfully envisions initiatives and goals that can be further detailed by the vision of the school's new leader. The visiting team's report, coupled with the Board's strategic planning work will likely expand on the opportunities and challenges noted below.

- Moving forward, KSDS needs to balance a number of curricular goals and will be well served by a bold and innovative re-envisioning of a day school academic program that aligns with best practices and 21st century skill acquisition. Coupled with this overarching goal is the opportunity to coalesce the faculty in both divisions to ensure strong scope and sequence K-8 and a shared vision regarding essential outcomes. Thus, a leader who can enthusiastically lead and actively engage in examination and probable re-design of the curriculum will be well matched to address this challenge.
- A leader who invests in learning KSDS's culture and history while becoming well acquainted with the many individuals who have been strongly connected to the school will be most successful in bringing the school forward with unity. Additionally, there are numerous long-tenured faculty who have helped to keep the school's positive culture

but will be retiring in the coming years. Thus, a new head of school will need to recruit new faculty while preserving the school's strong, positive culture.

- Stakeholders are looking for enhanced communication both internally and externally. As the new head works to become acquainted with the school community, exploring ways to communicate effectively with the school's constituents will be a great first step in determining the various mechanisms which will enable and support strong communication.
- The new head of school will have the opportunity to examine the school's administrative structure to ensure it meets the needs of the school.
- KSDS, like many Schechter and independent schools that serve elementary aged students, has experienced some decline in enrollment in recent years. The school has recently hired a part time marketing professional to help ensure that KSDS is proactively and thoughtfully reaching out and presenting the compelling strengths of its school to prospective families. A new head of school will need to partner in these and other student/family recruitment issues, serving the school as an enthusiastic ambassador and helping to distinguish KSDS in Baltimore's competitive independent school market.
- Three years ago, the school hired development professionals in order to lead fundraising efforts that specifically focus on the school's needs (rather than combining with the synagogue's). While the initial responses to these efforts have been good, the new head of school will need to embrace a leadership role in making the case to prospective donors for strong financial investment in the school's goals and needs. A more mature and robust development program will help strengthen the school's endowment (which currently is \$6.7M), support faculty, meet the growing need for tuition assistance and provide for campus improvements.
- While actively becoming well acquainted with the Krieger Schechter School community, the new leader will have the opportunity to strengthen community across the school's constituencies, which will be welcomed by the school's enthusiastic faculty and parents.

Leadership Needs:

Krieger Schechter Day School seeks an educational leader with a strong personal connection to Judaism who will embrace the school's mission and serve as a compelling role model and ambassador. Krieger Schechter ideally seeks a candidate with strengths in educational pedagogy and curriculum. The successful head of KSDS will be a leader who:

- Is a 21st century educator who is well equipped and excited to lead an effort to re-envision the day school curricular model
- Is a leader with a successful track record and proven abilities to manage, delegate, empower and inspire

- Possesses the range of skills necessary to manage the people, marketing and finance aspects of school leadership in today's world
- Embraces the role of chief ambassador, bringing strong leadership to the internal and external communities and building strong relationships that support the school's fundraising and marketing efforts
- Has a strong grounding in teaching and learning and is prepared to strengthen and lead an administrative team and experienced faculty
- Appreciates the needs for a vibrant Jewish Day School education, coupled with Jewish values
- Is honest, respectful, trustworthy and a person of impeccable integrity who values serving as a role model
- Is a strong communicator who appreciates the value of good and open communication and who will work to improve school wide communication
- Serves as an authentic, visible and accessible leader
- Is a good listener, adept at team building and collaboration, while still able to make decisions and move the school forward
- Has a sense of humor
- Is excited about working with the Board to establish KSDS as a pre-eminent educational institution and community focal point for area Jewish families.

This is an outstanding opportunity for an energetic school professional to build on and enhance a school that already possesses many strengths. The ideal candidate will be a role model, a fundraiser, a diplomat, and a thoughtful and dynamic educational leader.

For Consideration

Please send electronically:

- Resume
- Letter of Interest which reflects on this Opportunity Statement
- Educational Philosophy and/or Personal Statement

To:

Jane Foote or Bill Lyons, Managing Partners

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All inquiries will be treated confidentially and review of candidate files will begin immediately.