



Leadership Opportunity at Thaden School

Director of Athletics, Physical Education, and Wellness

Bentonville, Arkansas

Named in honor of Louise Thaden (1905-1979), a pioneering aviator born and raised in Northwest Arkansas, Thaden School opened in 2017 with approximately 50 students in grades 7 and 9. With an enrollment of approximately 300 students in Grades 6 through 12 (and expected to reach approximately 500 students at full scale), the school now seeks its next Director of Athletics, Physical Education, and Wellness. Reporting to the Founding Head of School and working closely with the school's leadership team, the Director will play a central role in the ongoing development of a world-class school in a rapidly growing part of the United States.

The School and the Region

Established with generous support from the Walton Family Foundation, Thaden School offers a challenging and balanced educational program that ignites in its students a passion for discovery and learning, prepares them to succeed in college, and inspires them to lead lives of integrity, purpose, and responsible global citizenship.

At the core of the Thaden's educational philosophy is a commitment to balance that takes many forms: a curriculum that gives equal emphasis to the sciences and the humanities; a wide variety co-curricular programs that create many opportunities for students to discover and pursue interests outside of their required course of study; and a diverse professional community that teaches students how to think (not what to think) as they explore questions and issues from all angles. With funding from the Walton Charitable Support Foundation, the school offers a remarkable tuition assistance program that makes a Thaden education affordable for all families. True to its motto (*Evolamus Unum: Together We Fly*), Thaden is a school at the center of the United States where students of many perspectives, talents, and backgrounds can learn and grow stronger together.

Located on a 30-acre campus in downtown Bentonville, the school is walking distance from the town square, The Momentary (a contemporary arts and music venue), the Eighth Street Market, Brightwater Culinary Institute, and many other cultural amenities. The campus has itself received numerous honors for architecture, including the James MacConnell Award for design excellence in the field of education. The Founding Head of School and the Board of Directors are now studying the feasibility of a capital campaign to support the design and construction of an indoor athletics facility on or near campus. In the meantime, the school operates its volleyball and basketball programs in a rented facility about 20 minutes away in the neighboring city of Rogers.

With more than 500,000 residents, the region combines a thriving economy with the natural beauty of the Ozarks and a rich variety of cultural and recreational opportunities such as the [Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art](#), [OZ Trails NWA](#), the [Scott Family Amazeum](#), and

the [Bentonville Film Festival](#), and the [FORMAT](#) festival. Northwest Arkansas is also home to the world headquarters of three Fortune 500 companies (Walmart, Tyson Foods, and J.B. Hunt) as well as the flagship campus of the University of Arkansas. see [Finding NWA](#) for more information about the region and its quality of life.

The Programs

Thaden embraces its athletics, physical education, and wellness programs (collectively “the Programs”) as integral parts of a well-balanced education that builds not only character, self-confidence, and teamwork but also critical thinking skills, self-awareness, and physical and emotional wellness for life.

As a member of the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA), the governing body for high school athletics in the state, the school currently competes in the following sports: volleyball (fall), cross-country (fall), basketball (winter), soccer (spring), and track and field (spring). The school is also well known for its mountain biking (fall and spring) and gravel riding (winter and spring) programs. Student-athletes in all of these sports have achieved notable successes that are especially impressive given the early stage of the school’s development.

The physical education and wellness programs are also important parts of the school’s required course of study, and the Director must also be committed to excellence and innovation in these areas as well.

The Position

The Director will lead the ongoing design and development of the Programs as vibrant platforms for teaching and learning that are closely aligned with the school’s mission and compatible with its core academic programs. For this reason, the Director will work closely with the academic leadership of the school and serve as one of its academic chairs with responsibility for the physical education and wellness curriculum. The Director will also work with the Head of School and Community Relations team to build support and resources for the development of campus infrastructure and to advance outreach and communications efforts that will elevate the school’s visibility, regionally and nationally.

The specific responsibilities of the Director include:

- hiring, supervising, mentoring, and evaluating staff for each of the Programs
- maintaining the operating budgets for each of the Programs
- ensuring the successful, timely, and well-coordinated delivery of the Programs, including, but not limited to, the following operational areas: scheduling, roster management, transportation, rental of off-campus facilities, hiring officials, procuring and maintaining uniforms and equipment, preparing facilities for competitions
- working closely with the academic leadership team to ensure that the Programs are well-coordinated with other aspects of the educational program
- leading the design and delivery of curriculum for physical education and wellness as the academic chair for these two programs
- ensuring compliance with league and school rules, procedures, and standards
- partnering with Community Relations to develop an effective communications plan
- overseeing strict compliance with CPR, First Aid, and other safety requirements

- presenting the Programs to prospective parents and students during information sessions and other admissions events and meetings
- representing the school and the Programs at league meetings and other events
- working with the Head of School and Community Relations to develop fundraising priorities and strategies and to assist with the design and development of campus infrastructure for the Programs
- taking on additional responsibilities and duties as needed

Experience and Qualifications

The ideal candidate for this position will be:

- **An educator** with high standards and a deep understanding of what excellence in teaching and coaching requires
- **A leader** with strong interpersonal skills who can build trust and inspire confidence among all constituencies
- **A mentor** who can guide and support coaches, faculty, and administrative staff in their professional development
- **An innovator and a collaborator** who can generate ideas and advance them with resourcefulness and in collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders
- **A planner and a builder** who can anticipate the needs and limitations of a rapidly growing school and develop strategies for meeting them
- **An administrator** with strong organizational skills and attention to detail who can manage deadlines and deliver high-quality work product on time
- **A communicator** who can articulate the mission and vision for the Programs with clarity and confidence

Qualified candidates must have at least a bachelor's degree in an appropriate field as well as several years of relevant experience. Independent school experience is not required, but candidates should demonstrate commitment to and excitement for the mission of Thaden.

Applications

Please submit your application materials through our online portal for [Thaden School Job Opportunities](#). Applications should include a cover letter and resume. Thaden is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all federal, state, and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, national origin, citizenship, age (18 or older), religion, disability, marital status, veteran status, and sexual orientation. Applications by members of all underrepresented groups, including women and people of color, are encouraged.

Compensation will be competitive within the independent school sector. All offers of employment are contingent upon successful completion of a criminal background check.