



HEAD OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School

New York, NY

Founded in 1764, Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School (CGPS) is one of the nation's oldest private schools and the largest independent school in Manhattan. CGPS offers a rigorous and comprehensive college preparatory education to 1,290 students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Suited to an academically diverse group of students — ranging from the highest achievers to those needing meaningful learning support — CGPS seeks to provide children with a balanced, caring educational experience. Rigorous yet relaxed, CGPS seeks to inspire and support students in an atmosphere that is cooperative rather than intensely competitive. Promoting intellectual growth while instilling in students a love of learning, CGPS nurtures individuals' academic and non-academic passions and strives to imbue in them concern and respect for others. The school seeks to empower its students, sending them into the world beyond CGPS with a solid educational foundation as well as the confidence, optimism, sense of purpose, and energy to achieve and exceed their dreams.

Serving 448 children in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 4, the Grammar School provides a balanced academic curriculum supplemented by a full palette of enrichment activities in a warm, structured, and supportive environment. Classes of 20–22 students are taught by two or three co-teachers in Grades PK–1 and two co-teachers in Grades 2–4.

The school's incomparable Upper West Side campus encompasses 12 buildings, including nine beautifully renovated, adjacent brownstones that house the Grammar School. With the opening this year of two new floors atop the main building, a self-contained Middle School for Grades 5–7 has been created for the first time.

CGPS has been led since 1981 by Dr. Richard J. Soghoian, who has guided the school through three decades of academic enrichment and physical expansion. Upon Dr. Soghoian's retirement this summer, Dr. William Donohue, Superintendent of Schools for the Byram Hills School District in Armonk, New York, will become CGPS's 14th Head of School.

Thus, the next Head of Grammar School will join CGPS at an important moment of transition. For a warm, forward-thinking, and collaborative lower school leader, this is an exceptional opportunity to build upon a well-established foundation of excellence.



APPLICATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 19, 2016





COLUMBIA GRAMMAR AND PREPARATORY SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

Mission

Founded in 1764, Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School balances a rigorous comprehensive college preparatory curriculum with healthy social and emotional development. We dedicate ourselves to educating students with diverse talents and backgrounds and offer them opportunities to learn, reflect, and safely express their ideas and creativity. With our parent body, we share a fundamental commitment to high academic achievement and the development of social responsibility.

ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

ENROLLMENT, PRE-K-12: 1,290

GRAMMAR:	448 (Pre-Kindergarten–Grade 4)
MIDDLE:	260 (Grades 5-7)
PREPARATORY:	582 (Grades 8–12)

STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO: 6 to 1

STUDENTS OF COLOR: 21%

GRAMMAR SCHOOL TUITION AND FEES: \$44,120–\$46,690

FINANCIAL AID: \$6.8 million to 15% of student body

PHYSICAL PLANT

LOCATION: Upper West Side of Manhattan (W 93rd St.)

FACILITIES: 12 buildings totaling 215,000 square feet

VALUE OF PLANT: \$275 million

FACULTY AND STAFF

TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 315

FULL-TIME FACULTY: 215

FACULTY WITH ADVANCED DEGREES: 68%

AVERAGE FACULTY TENURE AT CGPS: 15 years

AFFILIATIONS

ACCREDITATION: New York State Board of Regents,
New York State Association of Independent Schools

MEMBER: National Association of Independent Schools,
Independent School Admission Association of
Greater New York, Parents League of NYC

ON THE WEB: www.cgps.org

DEFINING STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES

CGPS emphatically rejects the notion that a commitment to challenging academics requires either a pressure-cooker environment or a student body limited to only the most academically gifted. As such, it occupies a unique niche in the New York City independent school marketplace, attracting families seeking a well-rounded and affirming experience that meets the needs of children with diverse talents, aspirations, and personalities.

Asked to describe the school's signature strengths, parents and faculty routinely describe CGPS as a warm and happy place – comfortable, structured, and supportive as it guides students toward academic achievement and increasing independence while emphasizing balance and moderation in student workloads. Top academic achievers are well served by the rigorous curriculum, as evidenced by the school's impressive college placement list. Support is available for those who need it, including a comprehensive Learning Resource Center.



A BRIEF HISTORY

Columbia Grammar School was founded in 1764, just 10 years after the founding of Kings College, which became Columbia College, now part of Columbia University. Originally established as a boys preparatory school for Kings College, Columbia Grammar School functioned for 100 years under the direct auspices of the college. The school became a proprietary institution in 1864 and obtained nonprofit status in 1941. As only the 13th Headmaster in CGPS's long history, Dr. Richard J. Soghoian was appointed in 1981.

Serious candidates for this position may wish to read Dr. Soghoian's 2012 book, *Mind the Gap! An Insider's Irreverent Look at Private School Finances and Management*. It clearly articulates CGPS's unique culture and educational philosophy while offering a lively history of the school's remarkable 30-year journey from near insolvency to its current position as one of New York City's top independent schools. The book also provides a fascinating tutorial on the core operating principles and management practices that have enabled CGPS to achieve a rare feat among independent schools:

- a balanced operating budget financed entirely through tuition and sundry income (with no endowment draw and no annual fund proceeds);
- highly competitive faculty salaries and small classes; and
- a beautiful and functional Manhattan campus valued at \$275 million that has been created through a steady series of major construction projects – all funded entirely through donations and leaving CGPS debt-free.

THE STUDENT BODY

Demand for the CGPS experience is robust, with the school this year receiving 350 applications for 40 spots in Kindergarten. As a family-oriented school, CGPS gives admissions preference to siblings as well as alumni and faculty/staff children. Attrition is very low, with most students who begin in Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten staying to complete their high school careers at CGPS.

Most CGPS students live in New York City, primarily Manhattan, with a few coming from New Jersey, lower Westchester County, and Connecticut. The student population is diverse across many dimensions, including the one-fifth who identify as persons of color. CGPS also prides itself on welcoming an academically diverse population and serving all of its students well.

THE FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATION

CGPS has invested generously in its faculty and staff. The result is a loyal, talented, and committed cadre of teachers with an average tenure of 15 years at the school – a marker of the school’s stability and an important contributing factor to parents’ satisfaction. Faculty salaries are on par with the top schools in the city, including the highest starting salaries and an average salary of more than \$100,000. Benefits are generous, including fully paid health insurance for each employee, partial tuition remission, and free breakfasts and lunches. Each faculty member has access to \$1,500 in professional development funds, and the school offers three summer grants per division.



Equally important to many faculty members is maintaining and extending a longstanding culture that has traditionally lavished trust on teachers and granted them considerable autonomy to tailor their teaching to their own interests and the particular needs of their students. With co-teachers in every Grammar School classroom, the faculty in that division enjoy particularly collegial relationships. Resources are abundant and easy to obtain without undue paperwork. The faculty bring a rich variety of backgrounds and experiences to their work; 68 percent hold advanced degrees.

The senior administrative team includes the Headmaster, the three Division Heads, and the Chief Financial Officer. Other administrators reporting to the Headmaster include the Development Director, the three Admissions Directors, the Maintenance Supervisor, the Security Coordinator, and the Athletics Director. The busy admissions operation is overseen by three Directors – one for each division, assisted by a staff of nine.

The Directors of the three divisions enjoy wide latitude and significant responsibilities in the oversight of their divisions, including hiring and firing, curriculum, and budgeting. Traditionally, the Grammar School Head has been supported by an Assistant Head. That position is now open, so the next Grammar School Head, working in conjunction with the incoming Head of School, will have the opportunity to make that hire.

The CGPS Parents Association plays an active role in the life of the school, building community and facilitating communication through a network of nearly 80 Class and Grade Representatives and through weekly communications to parents. The Parents Association sponsors numerous events ranging from all-school gatherings to parent discussion groups, community service projects, new-family welcoming activities, and teacher appreciation events. The group enjoys productive working relationships with the administration, including the division directors.

FACILITIES

Situated in a prime location on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, CGPS has created an impressive urban campus that offers among the highest ratios of academic space per student of all New York City’s private schools. Nine adjacent and fully renovated brownstones constitute the Grammar School, providing charming educational and play spaces for younger students as well as offices for many staff members. The Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2 classrooms are housed in two brownstones that were fully renovated in 2011. Each light-filled classroom occupies an entire floor of a brownstone, creating cozy and spacious spaces that include hardwood floors and pre-war details. The 2011 project also created a garden, sand and water area, science center, and outdoor play yards.

Established by adding two floors to the top of the school’s main building at 36 West 93rd St., the new 17,000-square-foot Middle School addition includes 17 classrooms, three science labs, a library/digital information center, a computer lab, and a rooftop play yard.

Three buildings constructed from the ground up host the Preparatory School and assorted offices. In all, the CGPS campus includes more than 10 science labs, three libraries, and six computer centers, as well as extensive art, music, and theater facilities. Technology is deployed in appropriate ways throughout the school, including iMacs, iPads, Chromebooks, SmartBoards, and 3D printing.

Athletic facilities include four gymnasiums, a weight and training room, and a swimming pool. Multiple indoor and outdoor play spaces provide recreational opportunities for younger students, as does adjacent Central Park.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

CGPS is committed to a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum, combined with an atmosphere in the classrooms and hallways that is warm and comfortable. Beginning in the earliest grades, the focus is on skill development, oral and written communication, and critical thinking, all facilitated through interactive discussion, cooperative group work, and hands-on activities. The school-wide student-teacher ratio of 5.8 to 1 and the availability of co-teachers in each Grammar School classroom promote the development of meaningful relationships. Character development is an important component of the Grammar School experience. Teachers throughout the division are trained in and employ Responsive Classroom techniques to promote a positive learning environment and build a strong sense of community throughout the division.

In addition to their academic classes in the core subjects of language arts, math, science, and social studies, Grammar School students participate in art, chess, music, Spanish, physical education, swimming, creative movement, drama, computer, library, environmental science, and cooking classes, all overseen by specialists. The social studies curriculum culminates each year in grade-wide parent-inclusive events, including a study of New York City landmarks, an International Day celebrating family immigration history, a Native American Pow Wow, and a Settlement Day that allows classes to create and share their own colonial settlement.

A broad variety of themes and events punctuate the school year in each grade. Beloved traditions include holiday concerts, a student-run farmers market, a school-wide ice skating party, a book fair, a street fair, a Halloween Party for Pre-K and Kindergarten, a Polar Bear Night winter swimming party for Grade 1, and grade-wide movie nights featuring films adapted from popular children's books.

CGPS offers extensive support services to promote student success and wellbeing. A team of five reading specialists support emerging readers, and math specialists are available to offer support and enrichment. A psychologist offers support to students and their families, developing programming and supporting individual students as needed. The **Learning Resource Center** was established in 1986 to provide support and remediation so that students with learning differences can thrive in the challenging academic environment at CGPS. The program offers one-on-one remediation and academic support during the school day that is fully integrated with each student's academic program. The LRC serves students from Grades 1–12. Space is limited to about 4 percent of the student body, and there is a substantial additional tuition for the program. The center is staffed by two administrators and 15 learning specialists, 11 of whom serve the Grammar School. The Grammar School **Power Hour** is a free, one-hour, after-school support and enrichment program. All students are invited to work with their classroom teachers, math and reading specialists, computer teachers, or chess and music instructors. An extended-day program runs from 3 to 6 each afternoon, and a variety of enrichment classes also are offered.

The warm, family-like sensibility of the Grammar School is reinforced in a number of ways. The strong sibling policy and the school's openness to serving a range of learners results in a large number of siblings within the division. Older students mentor younger through a Reading Buddy program. Parents volunteer to support the librarians, and in the younger grades they may arrange with teachers to lead an activity or project. The cafeteria is open to parents after morning drop-off, and many parents linger to have coffee and connect before beginning their day.

For a fuller description of the educational program, visit www.cgps.org. Here are a few highlights:

- A newly opened **Maker Space** – equipped with a variety of woodworking tools, art supplies, simple electronics, supplies, and 3D printers – allows students to tackle hands-on, do-it-yourself projects. Students are introduced to computer technology in Second Grade with basic programming concepts and simple graphics and animation skills. In Third and Fourth Grade, students have more access to computers, both in the lab and in their classrooms, as they explore topics including 3D design, video editing, robotics, and touch typing.



- CGPS has long emphasized theater, music, and visual arts. In the Grammar School, a full music, art, drama, yoga, and creative movement curriculum, combined with excellent facilities, provides a strong foundation of **arts education**. Seasonal songs, performances, and songs relevant to the classroom curriculum are incorporated into the music program. In Third Grade, students select an orchestral instrument to study for two years, after which they may continue their studies in the Middle and Preparatory Schools. Students learn about famous artists and practice their skills in drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and sculpture.
- **Community service** is integrated across all grades. The Parents Association-sponsored Columbia Cares Committee helps Grammar School teachers execute curriculum-based, grade-wide projects. These projects have included Operation Backpack (filling backpacks with food for children experiencing food insecurity), The Empty Bowls Project (with donations for the NAHA Reservation in coordination with the Grade 3 Pow Wow), and a Pre-K Coat Drive. The committee also organizes a school-wide day of service before Thanksgiving that engages many Grammar School students and their families. Students across the division participate in a Coin Harvest project, and Grade 4 students may participate in the optional Service Learning Club. Students in the club meet with representatives of charities and ultimately vote to award the proceeds of the Coin Harvest. This club is very popular with students, who arrive early once a week to participate.

- The wide-ranging **Chess program** is a signature feature of the CGPS experience, dating back to the 1930s and now spanning Grades PK–12. Overseen by a full-time faculty member, Chess is part of the curriculum in Kindergarten and First Grade, becoming a club thereafter. Students at all levels compete in city, state, and national tournaments. Preparatory School students work with younger children, and classes for parents are offered to promote their engagement. Chess sets can be found throughout the campus, and students often play in their free time.



- **Physical education** is offered in every grade, and an after-school program offers activities including karate and ice skating. Grammar School students participate in a popular swimming instruction program in the school's pool, augmented by a before-school swimming club.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The next Head of Grammar School will join CGPS at a particularly exciting time of transition, as the school also welcomes a new Head of School. The division's next Head must embrace wholeheartedly the core tenets of the CGPS philosophy and culture: the commitment to serve a broad variety of students well in a comfortable and happy atmosphere characterized by warmth, mutual respect, and a lack of pretension. S/he must also cherish and further the principles that have traditionally made CGPS a great place to work, including a lack of bureaucracy, a voice in decision-making, and the gifts of trust and autonomy.

Yet, beyond these non-negotiable principles, CGPS is a community open to continued growth and development. It has, in fact, successfully expanded and evolved dramatically over the past three decades. Members of the Grammar School faculty and staff are eager to welcome a new leader who will collaborate with them to strengthen the division further. Among the opportunities and challenges awaiting the next Head of Grammar School are the following:

- Bringing fresh eyes and new perspectives, the next Grammar School Head will be expected to lead stimulating conversations with faculty about curricular and pedagogical enhancements. The highly successful Learning Resource Center is key to the school's mission of serving a broad range of students well. Many affiliated with the Grammar School believe that more could also be done within the standard curriculum to differentiate instruction, including more attention to meeting the needs of students who could benefit from academic acceleration. The division's extensive enrichment offerings are highly regarded, but they also take time away from core academics, complicate scheduling, and result in many transitions for young children during the school day. Balancing the sometimes competing priorities of academic rigor and enriching extras will be an ongoing challenge for the division's next Head.
- The Grammar School will benefit from a strong, experienced, and accessible leader of faculty who will introduce needed structure and protocols in hiring, orientation, professional development, evaluation, and ongoing communication and collaboration among the faculty and staff. While teachers in the Grammar School value autonomy, they are also eager for leadership and feedback. The specialists, in particular, would welcome more engagement with their colleagues.
- Parents and faculty alike cite a need for enhanced communication from the Grammar School Head, an open door, and more visibility in the day-to-day life of the division.
- CGPS's identity as a Manhattan independent school that is unpretentious and comfortable is now firmly embedded in the school's DNA. Yet, like most of New York City's top-tier independent schools, CGPS has its share of affluent and prominent families. There is a strong desire within the community to ensure that families from diverse backgrounds – economic, racial, religious, and academic – continue to find CGPS a welcoming and familiar place. In the day-to-day leadership of the division, the Grammar School Head will need to lead with confidence and integrity – upholding the school's philosophy while managing parent expectations.

WHO SHOULD APPLY: IMPORTANT QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

This is an exceptional career opportunity for a talented and experienced lower school teacher and administrator who will embrace the unique vision and culture of Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School while leading the division forward. The ideal candidate will offer most or all of the following attributes:

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Excellent academic credentials, including an advanced degree – ideally in an area related to primary/elementary education or child development.
- A demonstrated passion for the work of education, including experience as a classroom teacher at the lower school level.
- Relevant experience in educational administration, ideally in an urban setting similar to that of CGPS.
- A forward-thinking educational vision and philosophy that is consistent with the mission and values of CGPS and the Grammar School.
- Substantial knowledge of and experience in grammar school curriculum and pedagogy.
- Exceptional communication and listening skills.
- Demonstrated ability to hire, inspire, develop, mentor, and evaluate a strong faculty and staff.

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

- A commitment to professionalism, demonstrated through high standards, integrity, evenhandedness, strength of character, and a willingness to set and enforce appropriate boundaries with all constituencies.
- An effective and collaborative management approach grounded in trust, respect, team-building, and delegation.
- A warm, engaging, compassionate, and approachable personality; a positive outlook.
- A genuine love of and eagerness to engage with children.
- An appreciation for the particular rewards and challenges of the NYC independent school world.

ANTICIPATED SEARCH CALENDAR

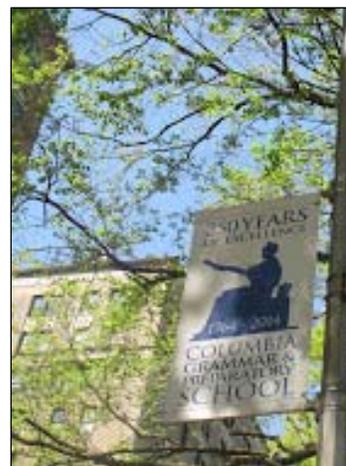
Application deadline:	December 19, 2016
Semifinalist interviews:	January 7–8, 2017
Finalist visits:	January 9–12, 2017
Appointment:	Mid-January 2017
Starting date:	July 2017

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND SEARCH PROCESS

Acting on behalf of CGPS, Wickenden Associates is actively recruiting talented primary/elementary school leaders for this unique leadership opportunity.

The lead consultants are Jim Wickenden (jwickenden@wickenden.com) and Laura Hansen (lhansen@wickenden.com). Both may be reached at (609) 683-1355. *Note: This search is being conducted on an accelerated timetable. Candidates are encouraged to make contact with Wickenden Associates as soon as possible to discuss the opportunity and the application process.*

After an initial review of applicants, the Search Committee will interview semifinalist candidates on **January 7–8, 2016**. The following week, finalists will be invited to CGPS for a more comprehensive series of interviews with representatives of the school's constituencies, including planned early-evening meetings with Grammar School parents on **January 12**. The incoming Head of School will participate in the process of selecting the new Head of Grammar School, and candidates who advance in the process will have the opportunity to meet with him.



Candidates should submit **no later than Monday, December 19, 2016**, the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position.
- A current résumé.
- A statement of educational philosophy.
- The names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. (We will obtain permission from candidates before contacting references.)
- Optional: Other supporting material (e.g. articles, speeches, or letters of recommendation) that would be useful to the Search Committee.

These materials should be transmitted via email attachment to searches@wickenden.com.

A mid-January appointment is anticipated. Wickenden Associates will keep all applicants informed of their status throughout the process.

