



Ursuline Academy

Dedham, MA

An independent Catholic School for girls in grades 7-12

www.ursulineacademy.net

Principal 2016

MISSION STATEMENT

Ursuline Academy is an independent Catholic school that educates young women for a life that reaches toward the Light and the Good.

Ursuline Academy has opened a search for its next Principal who will assume leadership in July 2016. The school seeks a visionary Catholic educator whose leadership will ensure the continuation of an excellent academic program and who will promote the mission and values of the school.

The school follows a President-Principal administrative model and the Principal reports to the President. The administrative team at the school consists of the President, Vice President, Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Advancement, Director of Admissions,



The seven stars on our shield represent our guiding values:

*1. **Soul:** We base our identity in the writings of our foundress, St. Angela Merici, in the Ursuline tradition, and in our connections with the global Ursuline community.*

*2. **Scholarship:** We emphasize the dual values of academic achievement and intellectual curiosity for its own sake.*

*3. **Spirituality:** We gather for prayer, liturgies, and retreats to direct ourselves toward the goodness of God.*

*4. **Sharing our Light:** We sing, dance, write, play, paint and program, always celebrating our diverse backgrounds and gifts.*

*5. **Sportsmanship:** We compete enthusiastically and conscientiously, and to give glory to God alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*).*

*6. **Solidarity:** We are a welcoming community that fosters respect for every human being and for all of God's creation.*

*7. **Serviam:** We seek to be a generous people who live the motto, "I will serve."*

Director of Communications, Director of Campus Ministry, Athletic Director, Director of Guidance, Business Manager, Director of Technology and Director of Facilities.

The school is located in Dedham, Massachusetts, on the southwest border of Boston. Ursuline students come from cities such as Dedham, Milton, Needham, Walpole and West Roxbury and represent a diversity of racial, ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds. The school welcomes students of all faiths.

Ursuline Academy is situated on 28 acres and includes classrooms, a gymnasium/auditorium, library and an art studio. A new Science Wing, with state-of-the-art laboratories, was constructed in 2002. Playing fields, tennis courts and the "Bear Cave" fitness center support the athletic program. A capital campaign to build the Ursuline Academy Athletic and Convocation Center is entering its public phase, with construction to begin in the spring of 2016.

Ursuline Academy is sponsored by the Ursuline Sisters of the Central Province, USA. The school is accredited by the New England Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges (NEASC). It is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS), National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE).

THE URSULINES

In 1535, Angela Merici, a woman in her sixties, founded a group of women called the Company of St. Ursula. Their mission was to spread the Gospel message into the homes and hearts of their neighborhood. These Ursulines, as they came to call themselves, spread around the world over the centuries, teaching, counseling and meeting the needs of the many. Today, there are more than 40 Ursuline-affiliated schools and



colleges throughout the United States and the world. Each school of Ursuline educators strives to meet the ever-changing needs of its students including those arising from diversity and learning needs. In 1990, in an effort to enhance Ursuline education across the continent, to continue the tradition of the Ursuline charism and education, and to ensure the ongoing service of Ursuline schools to their communities, an ad hoc committee was formed by the leadership of the Ursuline Congregations. Thus, the Ursuline Educational Network was established.

THE PROGRAM

The mission of Ursuline Academy and the charism of the Order of St. Ursula are reflected in the challenging college preparatory curriculum and overall educational experience that is provided to students. The Ursuline promise of “bring your inside out” is dedicated to the discovery and development of the whole person--mind, body and spirit. The college preparatory curriculum, emphasis on athletics and the arts and community service all are designed to instill character and leadership qualities and “share our light.”

To fulfill its mission, the school maintains a strong and balanced offering of required and elective academic and enrichment courses. Most courses at Ursuline operate at an accelerated, honors level. Advanced Placement courses are available to qualified students. Seventh- and eighth-grade students have the opportunity to enroll in high school classes in math and world languages, based upon ability and educational background. Theology classes are required at all grade levels. One hundred percent of graduates matriculate to four-year colleges and universities.

Ursuline Academy emphasizes the personal and spiritual development of its young women. In addition to religion classes, retreats are offered at all grade levels. Peer Ministers, seniors who are trained in listening, group leadership and faith values help lead the retreats. Service opportunities abound with a spring break trip to the Romero Center in Camden, NJ; the Annual Breast Cancer walkathon; student service in the local community and through various community organizations. Each girl must complete required community service hours annually. A majority of students embrace the spirit of Serviam by performing hundreds of additional hours. In total, Ursuline students enrich their communities by completing over 15,000 hours of community service each year.

Athletics are a vital part of the program, with 27 athletic teams, including many that are open to



middle school girls. In the past academic year, over 75% of students participated in at least one sport, with most participating in multiple sports. On the field and off, student athletes shine. Recently, the school has achieved distinction in athletics including Indoor Track and Field Division 5 State Championships and the Catholic Conference Championship in tennis. Three girls were selected as *Boston Globe* All-Scholastics and the Athletic Director was selected by the Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association as the Division H Athletic Director of the Year.

A robust arts program is available for any student who wishes to participate. The drama club presents three productions a year; liturgical dance, choral groups and arts club feature the talents of student work. The Performing and Visual Arts program also include the Speech Spectacular, Festival of the Arts and the Christmas Gathering. Numerous clubs and activities that meet both during and after school round out the extracurricular offerings at Ursuline. There are more than 30 offerings, including Arabic Club, Model UN, Robotics Club and Student Council, to name but a few.

Long-held traditions are an important aspect of the Ursuline experience. Girls look forward to such events as Homecoming, Women in Leadership Day, Mission Day, Junior Class Ring Ceremony, Prom and the Father-Daughter Dance. The Big/Little sister program pairs incoming 7th graders with high school sophomores to connect the girls for activities.

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Students speak of the importance, not only of the traditions, but also of the academics at Ursuline Academy. In addition, they value the relationships they have with their teachers, that their teachers know them well. The girls value the myriad opportunities for learning at the school, with the common goal of “being motivated and working hard!” They like the small class size and forge strong connections with one another through academics, athletics, the arts and peer leadership programs.

Enrollment for Fall 2015:

Grade 7 = 56
Grade 8 = 76
Grade 9 = 77
Grade 10 = 81
Grade 11 = 61
Grade 12 = 82

Total = 433

Administration: 13
Full-time Faculty: 34
Part-time Faculty: 2
Full-time Staff: 21

Student to Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Tuition (2015-16): \$18,000

Percentage of students receiving
Financial Aid: 10% merit
scholarships; 22% need-based





Faculty and staff at Ursuline Academy are a highly committed group of educators, whose shared vision and sense of community are vital components of the school's culture. Eighty-one percent of the faculty have graduate degrees and many have enjoyed a long tenure at the school. They value the close relationship between themselves and the students as well as among themselves. They say that the girls' dedication to the school

"makes our work easy." They are proud of the confident, ambitious and caring girls who emerge from Ursuline.

THE POSITION

The Principal has primary responsibility for the academic life of the school and must be committed to the mission and philosophy of Ursuline Academy as well as the charism of the Ursuline Sisters. Specifically, the Principal oversees curriculum development relevant to the 21st century and consistent with the school's mission and is responsible for working closely with faculty and staff to implement programs. The Principal supports and facilitates the policies and vision of the President of Ursuline Academy and works in close collaboration with the President to articulate a clear vision for Ursuline's program. The Principal must have an understanding of organizational dynamics so that appropriate professional structures can be maintained for the cohesive functioning of the academic program and instruction.

The challenge is to maintain the essence of the overall program while imbuing it with an enhanced sense of purpose to provide for meaningful implementation in a 21st century context. The Principal, therefore, will lead the faculty in effective discussion, articulation and implementation of the pedagogical vision for the school that will focus on innovation and best practices for both the middle and high school students, particularly in the context of the Ursuline mission for education and the nature of today's students. Specifically, she/he will engage the faculty to define and measure teaching excellence for Ursuline Academy, and work collaboratively through the professional development and evaluation program to ensure best practices.

The Principal will be responsible for working with the administration and faculty to provide a creative, quality program focusing on the implementation of a 21st century program within the Ursuline framework, ensuring quality programming that is cohesive and provides appropriate rigor as well as curricular alignment grades 7 through 12. Additionally, the Principal will develop appropriate systems and structures to ensure the effective implementation of the programmatic goals and to serve the needs of all of the students.

PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

The next Principal for Ursuline Academy should be a student-focused, visionary educator with experience in school administration. In addition to being a skillful manager and a strategic thinker, successful candidates will have the background and competencies that include most or all of the following:

- A passion for, and leadership experience in education, particularly in the education of young women, and the willingness to support a culture of learning and high expectations.
- The ability to embrace and communicate Ursuline Academy's mission to inspire and unite teachers, parents and prospective families.
- A deep understanding of and experience with faculty supervision and evaluation as well as pedagogy, program design and curriculum development.
- The ability to work closely with faculty and staff as an instructional leader, to support and facilitate their commitment to academic excellence, while delegating appropriately and ensuring accountability.
- A desire for collaboration and openness that genuinely invites and respects the perspectives and views of others, yet is decisive when required.
- The ability to connect and communicate effectively and frequently with faculty members, administration, parents and students.
- Knowledge of the effective use of technology as a teaching/learning tool as required for the position.
- A willingness to work closely and comfortably with the President, the administrative team, as well as with faculty and staff, to build a true partnership for the school.
- A graduate degree in educational administration or a related field is preferred.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

The ideal candidate for Principal at Ursuline Academy would be a Catholic educational leader who is mission-focused, confident, empathetic and approachable. Strong communication skills and comfort with reaching out to others are qualities that are desired in the new Principal, as well as an open-mindedness to listen to and consider different perspectives.

This educational leader will be hands-on and be able to motivate faculty and earn their respect

as the academic leader of Ursuline Academy. The next Principal is someone who is insightful, calm under pressure, committed to lifelong learning and possesses a forward-thinking view. Integrity, a sense of humor and a true love and commitment to all-girls' education are essential qualities. Finally, the Search Committee seeks someone who respects the history and traditions of the Ursulines and this institution and has a true desire to become an integral part of both the school and the local community.

SEARCH PROCESS

Ursuline Academy has engaged the national executive search firm Educational Directions, Incorporated, to assist with the search. The Search Committee plans to complete the search in Spring 2016.

Candidates should submit all information as soon as possible, but not before first speaking with one of the Search Consultants:

Risa Oganessoff Heersche rheersche@edu-directions.com

Mathew Heersche, Ed.D. mheersche@edu-directions.com

Electronic submission of materials is required. **Please send materials in a consolidated pdf format.** Reference letters can be submitted separately.

Candidates should submit:

- Cover letter defining interest in and qualifications for the Principalship at Ursuline Academy
- Statement of educational philosophy which includes the candidate's thoughts about assuming the academic leadership at Ursuline Academy
- Current resume
- Names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of five references
- Two written letters of reference

