NOTRE DAME ACADEMY
Worcester, MA

PRINCIPAL
Start Date: No later than July 1, 2022
nda-worc.org
Mission Statement

Notre Dame Academy is a dynamic, independent, Catholic school for girls in grades 7-12 sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Welcoming girls of all faiths, the Academy provides transformational experiences that “teach them what they need to know for life.” Our graduates are confident women who are lifelong learners, spiritual seekers, and compassionate global citizens.

OVERVIEW

Notre Dame Academy (NDA) in Worcester, MA, is an independent, all-girls Catholic school for students in grades 7-12 sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. From its founding in 1951, NDA has been faithful to its all-girls, college preparatory mission, and Catholic identity. This mission and identity of the school remain vibrant, relevant, and highly valued by Catholic and non-Catholic families alike.

The school is seeking a new principal who will serve as the educational and instructional leader of the school. The principal is responsible for managing the policies, regulations, and procedures that ensure a safe learning environment and overseeing all daily operations of the NDA academic program, health, guidance, and wellness services, and the congruence between the school’s mission and its instruction and activities. This is an outstanding opportunity for a dynamic and collaborative leader looking to engage with a community that is passionate about the mission and aspirations of its school.

NDA is perfectly positioned for growth and renewal. NDA’s all-girls Catholic mission is powerful and becoming increasingly influential in Central Massachusetts as a significant choice for families of all faith traditions. The academic bar is high, and alum success shows the quality and rigor of its pedagogy and student outcomes.
Developing a culture of evidenced-based teaching and building on the solid foundation of the past seven decades, this work reaffirms the NDA values and commitments that inspired St. Julie Billiart and were strengthened by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who began their remarkable Catholic educational ministry in 1804. In its 71st year, Notre Dame Academy confidently looks forward, emboldened with a renewed mission and confident vision that will continue to lead the way.

THE SCHOOL

NDA is the only independent Catholic college preparatory all-girls school in Central Massachusetts, accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Studies document that an all-female education provides students with a competitive academic edge, producing greater competency in math, science, technology, arts, and world languages. One hundred percent of NDA graduates are accepted to colleges of their choice.

The philosophy of education at Notre Dame Academy is built on the belief that education should prepare students for their role as women in the world. The school strives to educate its students to become more mindful of their choices and develop a spiritual awareness that opens their minds and hearts more widely to the most important issues in their lives, to others, and ultimately to the world.

In order to learn to make responsible choices, students have the freedom to learn in a school dedicated to high academic standards and to involve themselves in the community, both utilizing its resources and serving its people. Faith plays a vital role in the life of the school. In addition to the robust Religious Studies curriculum, students participate in liturgies, retreats, and service opportunities, such as the 50-year tradition of the signature Love In Action program.

At a Glance

Founded: 1951
Total students: 240
Students of color: 15%
Non-Catholic Students: 33%
Total faculty: 28
Faculty with advanced degrees: 54%
Student/teacher ratio: 13:1
Financial aid budget: $540,000
Students receiving aid: 37%
Endowment: $1,200,000
As the sponsoring Congregation, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur share the governance role with the Board of Trustees. The Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur was founded in France by Saint Julie Billiart in 1804. This was the beginning of a global ministry of education for young women. Today, nearly 2,000 Sisters minister on five continents. In 2015, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur celebrated 175 years of service in the United States, where they are recognized as leaders in global education.

NDA is also part of an international community with sister schools in 16 counties on five continents. Schools sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur are guided by the “Hallmarks of a Notre Dame de Namur Learning Community,” a statement that describes the essential characteristics, values, and activities of a Notre Dame learning community.

**SERVICE**

At Notre Dame Academy, service to others is central to the school’s faith tradition and its development of the whole person—mind, body, and spirit. Each year, students and staff are involved with projects and organizations around their community. Traditions include the Thanksgiving Food Drive, Worcester, Lenten project for SND Missions, Breast Cancer Awareness Day, Friends of Rachel, Service Day, and more.

As part of the Religious Studies curriculum, juniors and seniors volunteer in a variety of social service programs through the Love-in-Action program, which supports and challenges each student in a two-year commitment to a service project. This process opens up possibilities and challenges students to respond to various needs within the wider community and assists them in becoming women of service and character. Approximately 120 hours of service are completed over the two years, requiring a contract, weekly service, journal reflections, and supervisor evaluation.
ACADEMICS

By combining the essential elements of an education that emphasizes history, literature, and language studies within a modern school framework with integrated technology and contemporary teaching pedagogies, NDA offers students an authentic opportunity for both academic and personal growth. Classroom learning models create an experience that fosters interaction and collaboration between students and teachers, allowing for dynamic discussions and meaningful access to learning and lifelong opportunities. In all grades, NDA offers a challenging, engaging curriculum that encourages inquiry and critical thinking and prepares students to thrive in college and beyond. Every young woman is encouraged to use her voice and knows that her voice and opinion are respected. This culture powerful and relevant and creates the best environment for girls to learn, grow, and develop.

Students in the St. Julie Division for grades seven and eight complete coursework in religious studies, English, mathematics, history/social studies, science, world language (French or Spanish), physical education, arts, technology, and health. A guidance seminar is also offered, focusing on study skills and connecting students to the Guidance Department at NDA.

In grades 9-12, all students must complete six full-credit courses each year, in addition to partial-credit requirements. Grade 11 and 12 students may carry seven full-credit courses with prior school approval. Honors and Advanced Placement level courses are also offered. Religious studies courses are required at each grade level, as is a guidance department seminar. Requirements vary by grade, but each student will take classes in English, mathematics, history, a science, world language (French or Spanish), Latin, physical education, health, creative arts, and many electives.
College Acceptances

Students from the Class of 2021 were accepted to the following institutions, among others:

Assumption University
Auburn University
Boston College
Boston University
Colgate University
College of the Holy Cross
Fordham University
George Washington University
Hofstra University
Louisiana State University
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University, Maryland
Loyola University, New Orleans
New York University
Northeastern University
Regis College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rochester Institute of Technology
Sacred Heart University
Saint Anselm College
Saint Michael’s College
Savannah College of Art and Design
Stonehill College
Suffolk University
Syracuse University
Trinity College
Tulane University, Louisiana
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Edinburgh
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Boston
University of Massachusetts, Lowell
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
University of San Francisco
University of Vermont
Villanova University
Wheaton College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Worcester State University
Xavier University

See the full list.

The Notre Dame Academy Certificate Programs consist of the Salisbury Certificate of the Arts, STEM Excellence Certificate, and the Global Perspective Studies Certificate. These certificate programs are a commitment by students to take a “deeper dive” into a chosen discipline during their junior and senior years culminating in a capstone presentation and portfolio. Students who complete the program are recognized with a certificate and cord on Class Day, documentation of the accomplishment on their transcript, and acknowledgment in the Graduation Day program.

The Guidance Department at the school helps each student make decisions about her next academic environment. Using an individualized approach, counselors work with students, parents, and teachers to explore options that meet the academic and co-curricular interests which provide the best fit for the individual. Students receive guidance in writing essays, preparing for interviews, and completing applications.

ARTS

At Notre Dame Academy, the arts are an integral part of the curriculum – an essential ingredient in a fully rounded education. Through performance in dance, theater, band, chorus, and orchestra and their creative productivity in visual arts, students share their gifts with each other and with local audiences.
There are a range of groups and ensembles students can join, including Art Club, Chamber Chorale, Dance Ensemble, Flute Choir, Jazz Ensemble, and the Spring Musical, among many others.

All NDA students are also required to take Creative Arts classes during their 7th, 8th, and 9th grade years. Designed to introduce students to the visual and performing arts and to encourage students to experience these arts as participators, students are introduced to the masters of dance, visual arts, music, and drama while they themselves learn some basics in acting, dance and music performance, and explore pottery, printmaking, painting, drawing, and sculpture. This course culminates in the spring with an art exhibition of student work and a performance involving all the arts.

**ATHLETICS**

Educating the body as well as the mind, NDA offers a robust athletic program. The Academy has an unmatched coaching staff and a quality athletic complex complete with three fields, a newly renovated gymnasium, and a strength & conditioning center. Athletic team offerings include cross country, field hockey, soccer, volleyball, basketball, ice hockey, golf, lacrosse, tennis, softball, and track & field. Sixty percent of the student body participates in athletics at the varsity and sub-varsity level. The Rebels continually qualify for Massachusetts State tournaments and boast a rich tradition of success with nine state championship titles.
SCHOOL LIFE

Community is a central part of life at Notre Dame Academy. Students, faculty, and staff interact with respect and compassion. Teachers know students on an individual level, serving not only as educators but as advisors, coaches, and mentors. A number of annual traditions unite the school community, participating together in Arts Day, Athletic Awards Night, liturgies, musical concerts, Retreat Day, Saint Julie Day, Spirit Week, Women’s History Week, and more.

Expanding learning beyond the classroom and providing students with opportunities to pursue passions and interests, NDA offers a variety of co-curricular clubs. Students can choose from academic clubs such as Book Club, French Club, History Club, Math Team and Science Club, or special interest clubs like Diversity Club, Model United Nation, OXFAM, and girlUp Club. Students may also choose to participate in Student Government.

CAMPUS

NDA is an urban school centrally located on 13 green acres in Massachusetts’ second-largest city. Campus features an athletic center, two athletic fields, a main building with a 280 seat theater, library, student center, and art gallery, and an international studies building, The Gage House.

NDA is adjacent to an array of community anchor institutions, colleges, and universities. This proximity uniquely positions students to have choice and access for authentic real world opportunities, transformational growth, service through partnerships, and academic excellence. Through community partnerships such as the dual enrollment program with Assumption University, NDA students have the opportunity for unique academic experiences. In addition, NDA faculty have access to engage within Worcester’s community network of professional learning.
Worcester is a city in Central Massachusetts with a population of around 206,000, making it the second most populous city in New England after Boston. Located just 40 miles from Boston, Worcester is known as the “Heart of the Commonwealth.” Services, particularly education and healthcare, make up a large portion of the city’s economy. Worcester’s many colleges and universities, including Assumption University, Clark University, the Jesuit College of the Holy Cross, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute, make higher education a considerable presence. Large companies such as Hanover Insurance, Unum Insurance, Fallon Health Plan, and Polar Beverages have offices in the city.

For outdoor enthusiasts, the city has many ponds and two prominent lakes: Indian Lake and Lake Quinsigamond, also known as Long Pond, which stretches four miles across the Worcester and Shrewsbury border and is a popular competitive rowing and boating destination.

The arts are alive in Worcester, with music and theater flourishing at Mechanics Hall and The Hanover Theatre for Performing Arts. Museums including the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester Historical Museum, and EcoTarium regularly schedule special exhibitions and present a variety of fun and educational programs for all ages.

A short drive away, Boston offers the attractions as one of the world’s premier cities. World-class cultural and educational resources, historical sites, legendary sports, and an attractive harbor make Boston a city worth exploring.
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Notre Dame Academy seeks an inspiring leader who will establish, oversee, and promote high standards and expectations for all students and staff in regards to academic performance, community, and behavior.

The Principal is responsible for creating and maintaining a dynamic and supportive learning environment for Grades 7-12 through comprehensive responsibility for curricular and co-curricular (non-athletic) activities. Achieving academic excellence requires that the school Principal work collaboratively to direct and nurture all instructional and student support personnel and to communicate effectively with parents. Inherent in the position are the responsibilities for scheduling, curriculum development, co-curricular activities, personnel management, and emergency procedures. The next leader will need to be a team player who is excited to lead with conviction and empathy.

Given NDA’s distinctive focus and mission, the principal must possess an appreciation for inquiry-based student-centered learning, a willingness to collaborate, and a positive outlook. They must have a genuine passion for working with young women and supporting a mission of providing transformative educational opportunities that treat each student as an individual. In addition to being an imaginative and collegial leader, a strong candidate will also bring many of these following qualities, skills, competencies, and experiences to the role:

Position Responsibilities
• Establish, oversee, and promote high standards and expectations for all students and staff for academic performance and responsibility for behavior;
• Articulate a clear academic vision that complements the mission, core values, and commitment to the SNDdeN Hallmarks. Help faculty and staff to integrate the mission in academic and co-curricular programs;
• Nurture both students and teachers to achieve their greatest potential academically, instructionally, and spiritually;
• Manage, evaluate, and supervise effective and clear procedures for the operation and functioning of the school consistent with the philosophy, mission, values, and goals of the school including instructional programs, co-curricular activities, and discipline systems that ensure a safe and orderly climate. Establish the annual master schedule for instructional programs, ensuring sequential learning experiences for students consistent with the school’s philosophy, mission statement, and instructional goals;
• Supervise the instructional programs of the school, evaluating lesson plans, and observing classes on a regular basis to encourage the use of a variety of instructional strategies and materials consistent with research on learning and student growth and development;
• Establish procedures for evaluation and selection of instructional materials and equipment, approving all recommendations. Review, prepare, and approve aspects of the budget that pertain to the academic program;
• Recruit, hire, and coordinate the orientation of new faculty and reporting staff; and
• Coordinate professional development related to best practices in curriculum and instruction, and utilize school-wide data to plan for continued and sustained academic excellence and growth.

As NDA continues to grow and evolve, the new principal will have the opportunity to address the following priorities within the school:

• **Collaborating closely with the Head of School to support NDA’s mission and promote excellence in teaching and learning consistent with an outstanding progressive school.** The principal will champion the pedagogical innovation that advances NDA’s commitment to experiential, inquiry-based, project-centered learning. They will strengthen and implement student assessment systems that are consistent with NDA’s commitment to progressive education and inquiry-based learning.
• Continuing to support the development and success of faculty at all stages of their careers.

The principal will oversee and strategically grow the professional development opportunities for faculty and promote the power in NDA as an emerging Professional Learning Community. They will review, strengthen and implement a constructive and collaborative approach to faculty hiring and an effective feedback loop for growth, support, and evaluation. They will support institutional assessment efforts related to teaching and learning, to ensure achievement of Strategic Plan outcomes.

• Assessing NDA’s current academic programs and developing new ones to address the changing needs of the students.

The principal will oversee curriculum development and coordination in both divisions. They will oversee and strengthen learning support programs and resources at all levels and develop and support a coherent and mission-consistent approach to the instructional use of technology. The principal will support the ongoing assessment of and improvements to the school schedule.

• Demonstrating a visionary and strategic style of academic leadership, learning for the future.

As the lead learner, the principal will be challenged with ensuring that both teaching and learning continue to be highly rigorous, authentic, and more purposeful/impactful than ever before; deeper learning and relevance will only happen when students experience their learning “through meaning” and authentic opportunities that are personally relevant, emotionally fulfilling, and socially valuable. Also help the faculty become competent with skills that will foster innovative teaching and learning.

• Serving as a passionate advocate, both internally and externally, for both Divisions within the School.

They will facilitate and support the coordination of co-curricular and co-curricular activities as part of a holistic and transformative educational experience. The principal will implement other special projects that advance teaching and learning at the School. The new principal will partner with parents, alumni, and other constituent groups in the educational enterprise.

• Maintaining and strengthening even further NDA’s diverse, inclusive, positive, and supportive climate.

The new principal will promote diversity and social justice across the curriculum in both divisions and develop new models for partnering with the community and anchor institutions as an integral part of the school’s educational model.
REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

Candidates who are most likely to advance will demonstrate many of the following qualities and characteristics:

• Possesses an advanced degree in a relevant/educational, curriculum and Instruction leadership field;
• At least two (2) years of administrative/leadership team experience, preferably in a faith-based independent school;
• At least five (5) years of teaching experience, preferably at both the middle and high school level in a Catholic school setting;
• A practicing Catholic whose values mirror those of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur;
• Experience in an all-girls’ school preferred;
• A successful proven track record of curriculum planning and student assessment;
• Experience hiring, talent search, evaluating, and mentoring faculty;
• Knowledgeable of the current research on innovative teaching, learning and the brain and some experience applying this research in a school setting;
• Professionally networked;
• Willing to offer feedback and values receiving feedback;
• Demonstrated ability to thrive in a collaborative environment and enjoys building and working as a team rather than rigid hierarchies; and
• Intellectual nimbleness, resourcefulness, entrepreneurship, and adaptability.
Leadership Skills

- Ability to collaborate closely with the Head of School to support NDA's mission and to promote excellence in teaching and learning consistent with an outstanding progressive school;
- Proven success in working collaboratively in educational leadership;
- Dynamic and visionary instructional leader with a solid understanding of the developmental and curricular need of middle and high school students;
- Ability to access NDA's current academic programs and develop new ones to address the changing needs of students;
- Personal and professional commitment to social justice and equity;
- Forward-thinking, visionary, and creative educator who can bring innovative ideas to life;
- Student-centric decision-maker;
- Commitment to providing high-quality professional development and coaching to the instructional staff;
- Commitment to support the development and success of faculty at all stages of their careers;
- A good sense of humor;
- Effective community building leader who is student-focused and embraces school and life through actions and interactions with students, colleagues, and parents;
- Empathetic problem solver;
- Excellent written and oral English skills when communicating with students, parents, and teachers; and
- Technologically capable.

TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé and CV
- Statement of Educational Philosophy
- Academic Transcript(s)
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate’s permission) to:

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