



LOWER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Founded in 1861, The Pingry School is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory day school for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Situated on two spacious campuses in Basking Ridge (Grades 6-12) and Short Hills (Grades K-5), New Jersey, the school draws students of varied talents and diverse backgrounds from nearly 100 communities in New Jersey and New York. Together, Pingry's two campuses in Short Hills (K-5) and Basking Ridge (6-12) serve more than 1,100 dynamic students. Pingry students participate in an engaging and challenging academic program, complemented by extensive co- and extracurricular opportunities, thriving in a community that is committed to four pillars: [diversity and inclusion](#), [intellectual engagement](#), [honor and character](#), and [stewardship and sustainability](#).

Reporting directly to the Head of School and serving on the Administrative Team, the Lower School Director will be the academic and administrative leader for an experienced, joyful, and cohesive faculty and an engaged, diverse student body in Grades Kindergarten through 5 on the Short Hills campus.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

As evidenced in [this video](#), Pingry is one school on two campuses. The Short Hills Campus is home to approximately 290 students in Kindergarten through Grade 5. This 28-acre campus includes a fully renovated, modernized building with grade-specific collaboration spaces, a STEAM neighborhood, Makerspace, dedicated instructional spaces for visual arts, drama, and music, a full-sized gymnasium, playground, outdoor athletics fields, and a campus garden. Take a [virtual tour of the Short Hills Campus](#)!

The Basking Ridge Campus hosts a Middle School of 270 students in Grades 6 through 8 and an Upper School of approximately 580 students in Grades 9 through 12. Facilities on this campus include student and faculty collaboration spaces; state-of-the-art science labs; an arts center, including a 240-seat theater; a 45,000-square-foot multisport athletics center; pool; and on-campus nature trail and campsite.

Pingry is known for its outstanding faculty, 73% of whom have earned a master's degree or higher. Currently, 20 faculty members have taught at Pingry for 25 years or more, a distinction known at the School as "Magistri Maxime Laudandi." The Basking Ridge Campus also claims one four-legged employee: Finn, a Border Collie trained to chase geese off Pingry's athletic fields.

With an average class size of 16 in the Lower School, 13 in the Middle School, and 14 in the Upper School, students are truly known by their teachers, who are committed to their



academic, social, and emotional development. Over 7,200 members strong and living in 37 countries around the world, Pingry alumni are engaged, active members of the school community. Over 700 attend Reunion events each year, supporting the School through philanthropy and volunteerism. The Pingry School stewards an endowment of just under \$100 million dollars, while the 2018-19 annual fund raised \$2.81 million from 1,850 donors. To learn more about Pingry, visit: pingry.org/about.

PINGRY'S HISTORY

More than 150 years ago, Dr. John Francis Pingry founded a school with a broad vision and roots that extended well beyond academics. Beginning with a commitment to classical education, Dr. Pingry envisioned an institution that would not only foster intellectual vigor, but also instill in its students a sense of honor, strength of character, and a commitment to service, both nationally and globally. Naturally resulting from the School's commitment to its longstanding [Honor Code](#), community service and civic engagement are integral to school life.

The School was founded in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in 1861 to provide both scholastic training and moral education for boys. Three decades later, the School relocated to a larger campus in Elizabeth, and, in 1953, it moved to Hillside.

Two milestones occurred during the 1970s: Pingry merged with the Short Hills Country Day School in 1974, and the first female students graduated in 1976. In 1983, Pingry's Middle and Upper Schools moved to their current location in Basking Ridge, near the intersection of two major highways, to position the School for New Jersey's future population growth.

With firm adherence to the highest of academic, personal, and social values, Dr. Pingry established a standard for private education that has defined the School's legacy throughout its history. Today, more than ever, that standard continues to guide its mission for the future. Learn more at pingry.org/about/mission-and-history.

LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Matt Levinson started as Pingry's 16th Head of School in July of 2019. Mr. Levinson has over 25 years of leadership experience in independent schools, most recently serving as Head of School at University Prep in Seattle, Washington, and previously in senior leadership positions at Marin Country Day School and The Nueva School, both in the San Francisco Bay Area. He began his career in education at Princeton Day School and was active in summer programs at both New Jersey SEEDS and Prep for Prep. In addition to his leadership experience, he has taught Middle and Upper School history, served as a

department chair and grade level dean, and coached Upper School varsity soccer. Mr. Levinson has established a strong record as an innovative educator who is dedicated to the health and well-being of his school community. In announcing his appointment to the Head of School role, the Chair of Pingry's Board of Trustees shared more about [Mr. Levinson's extensive leadership experience](#); Mr. Levinson shared his thoughts in [his own letter to the Pingry community](#).

Prior to Mr. Levinson's tenure, Headmaster Nathaniel E. Conard led the Pingry community through steady and thoughtful development with the successful completion of the Sesquicentennial Plan, formulated in 2007 and updated in 2011, followed by the Blueprint for the Future capital campaign, which exceeded its goal and raised over \$70 million. With the launch of its [2018 Strategic Plan](#)—Vision, Purpose, Impact—the School seeks to advance its vision even further, focused in five areas:

- **Purpose and Disciplines**, enhancing Pingry's curriculum model to best support student outcomes and prepare students for life
- **Global Education**, developing alumni who will be citizens of and contributors to the larger community of the world
- **Student Well-Being**, promoting an environment that supports physical, mental, emotional, and social health and well-being
- **Faculty & Staff Growth and Development**, building the capacity of each to best fulfill the Pingry mission
- **Maximizing Impact**, improving Pingry's financial sustainability in ways that expand and enhance the School's positive impact on society

PINGRY'S LOWER SCHOOL

From Kindergarten through Grade 5, Lower School students lay the important foundation of their educational future. Here, in a nurturing environment where they are well known, and with an [academic framework](#) focused on critical thinking and cross-disciplinary study, children learn and discuss principles of honorable behavior, practice teamwork, and develop their independence. Whether in the science lab, [drama or art studio](#), playground, or [playing fields](#)—and guided by a desire to impart a love of lifelong learning—Pingry's faculty teaches students to embrace the principles of honorable behavior, to celebrate diversity, and to collaborate. These academic and life lessons are complemented with community and civic engagement activities that begin in Kindergarten, exposing children to the value of helping others through a variety of age-appropriate, hands-on activities.

As students mature, they are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their education to promote initiative, self-discovery, self-reliance, and independence through study skills, organization, and attention to process.

Faculty in the Lower School prioritize the education of the whole child. They are collaborative and creative teachers who explore current best practices and utilize professional development to integrate design thinking, STEAM, experiential education, outdoor education, and responsive classroom techniques into the curriculum. Teachers put the honor code into practice daily. They are passionate about diversity, inclusion, and social justice education and seek to weave these threads into the curriculum.

Lower School students experience a seamless transition to the Middle School on the Basking Ridge campus. In fourth grade, students shift to a departmentalized curriculum that readies them for novel, rigorous intellectual and organizational challenges. Additionally, two cornerstone courses, "Decisions" and "Study Skills," expose them to the problem-solving, note taking, and learning strategies essential for success in the [Middle School](#), and ultimately in the [Upper School](#). Filled with happy memories, Lower School students complete Grade 5 with the building blocks they need to be successful in the next stages of their Pingry experience.

WORKING AT PINGRY

Pingry is a vibrant, K-12 community that values education and cares deeply about its students. Responsible, dedicated [faculty and staff](#) receive rewards and recognition for jobs well done, and ongoing professional development is a priority at Pingry. As a community that celebrates its diversity, Pingry actively seeks to represent that diversity among the student body and faculty and staff alike. Faculty and staff choose to live in suburban, urban, and small-town communities in New Jersey close to Basking Ridge and Short Hills, as well as in New York City and its suburbs. Pingry's proximity to diverse residential options means that faculty and staff have a range of commuting options by public transportation, the school [busing program](#), carpool, or private vehicle.

THE ROLE OF THE LOWER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Reporting directly to the Head of School and serving on the Administrative Team, the Lower School Director will preserve and further elevate the excellence and rigor of academic and co-curricular programs. The Lower School Director directly supervises the entire faculty and staff of the Lower School, in partnership with the Lower School Assistant Director of Student Life, Lower School Assistant Director of Academics, and School Counselor.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Through a collaborative leadership model, the next Lower School Director will have the opportunity to:

- Celebrate and preserve the unique experience of the Lower School and its campus while raising its visibility within the K-12 Pingry community
- Advance innovation in teaching and learning using research-based methods
- Attract, develop, and retain excellent faculty and staff
- Articulate the value of the Lower School experience to prospective families
- Communicate compellingly and consistently with all Lower School constituents

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- Experienced, inspirational, and collaborative leader
- Strategic, communicative, transparent decision-maker who prioritizes the student experience
- Responsive listener who leads with compassion, warmth, and integrity
- Collaborative educator who values and fosters a diverse and inclusive community
- Honorable individual who highly prizes a community of mutual respect and trust
- Leader of change through influence, not authority
- Thoughtful colleague who values Pingry's traditions and mission
- Classroom teaching experience and advanced degree preferred

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications, including a cover letter and resume, in confidence to: PingryLSDirector@storbecksearch.com



Sherry Coleman, Partner
Staci Williams Seeley, Associate
Storbeck Search & Associates

It is The Pingry School's employment policy that individuals will receive equal opportunity in all matters pertaining to recruitment, employment, salary, promotion and assignment, regardless of race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy status, genetic information, marital status, amnesty or status as a covered veteran, or other basis proscribed by federal, state, and local law. Decisions regarding employment and promotion will be based upon valid job-related factors.