



First Grade (Lower Middle Group) Teacher/Administrator

Walden Center and School seeks a dynamic Lower Middle Group Teacher (1st) to join our teaching collective in the fall of 2026. If you have a vision of building a close-knit community, of working with kids, parents, and a small committed team of educators, this may be the engaging, invigorating, satisfying job you are looking for.

Walden Center and School has been a leader in progressive elementary education and collective administration for over 65 years. Walden is an independent K-6 school where drama, music, language, and art sit alongside traditional academic subjects as our core curriculum. At Walden, we believe that children learn best when their academic, emotional, physical, and social needs are addressed, and families are an integral part of our community. Teachers take an individualized approach in designing their curricula in order to meet each child where they are developmentally. Also, the teachers run the school as a teacher-led collective, which provides them with autonomy, and the right and responsibility to make decisions that affect both their own classrooms and the whole school. We are passionate about working with the diversity of our current community and strive to support an environment that feels inclusive and intentional.

Our approach to learning encourages creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking as a means to help children develop a lifelong love of learning, a strong sense of community, and a powerful sense of self. We believe learning should be personalized, child-centered, and joyful.

Job Description

Lower Middle Group (1st grade) Teacher:

This position is for teaching the Lower Middle Group using a self-developed curriculum. Our teachers integrate arts and play-based learning in their lessons in a hands-on, meaningful way. Walden teachers practice flexibility, openness, and keen observation to fully engage students and support their joy of learning. Lower Middle Group collaborates with the Lower group (TK-K) class which provides opportunities for community-building, leadership, and encourages playful and joyful learning. We believe that this approach honors different learning needs and life experiences. We utilize various assessment tools to inform our teaching; however we do not administer formal tests or give grades.

Teaching Duties:

- Foster a warm, welcoming, safe classroom community
- Create an engaging and developmentally appropriate multi-sensory program for First grade curriculum
- Prepare hands-on, project-based lessons grounded in constructivist principles
- Plan and implement thoughtful language arts, math, science, social-emotional, and anti-bias units
- Ability to create a positive learning environment through consistent, fair, and respectful classroom management
- Communicate effectively about student learning and behavior with parents and students' other teachers
- Contribute to weekly notes home regarding curriculum, special events, and classroom needs
- Attend parent-teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring and as needed throughout the year

Administration (Collective duties)

At Walden, there is no “principal” of the school. We operate as a collective, meaning that the teachers are solely responsible for all matters pertaining to the school's day-to-day operation and leadership functions. In this non-hierarchical structure, all teachers play an equal role in the running of the school, and decisions are made on a consensus model.

For your first two years, your duties as a member of the collective will include the following:

- Actively participating in weekly staff meetings
- Participating in the planning and executing of school events, including community-wide events and assemblies
- Collaborating to ensure the smooth operation of the school, which might include coordinating schedules, making admissions decisions, and communicating with other stakeholders
- Implementing and managing school policies and procedures, helping to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment
- Participating in at least two school committees
- Supporting other administrative needs as they arise
- Meet with a mentor once a week

Typically, in your third year at Walden, your duties will increase as you become a core collective member. This will entail:

- Additional time with the other core collective members for sensitive and pressing issues
- Leadership positions on school committees
- Evaluating, mentoring, and managing fellow employees
- Ultimate responsibility for community-wide issues, complaints, problems
- Managing the recruitment and hiring of new staff

Other Collective duties

- Is on-site from 8:45-3:15p for teaching days and till 6p on Wednesdays for staff meetings
- Supervising students when assigned duty
- Collaborate with Collective members in consensus building process
- Problem-solve classroom and administrative issues
- Reads and responds to emails regarding school business in a timely manner
- Attends and participates in school events
- Reflects on and supports the school's vision and mission
- Commitment to participate in collectively administering the school using a consensus model
- Supports ongoing school business after hours and on weekends as needed
- Supports administrative goals generated in the meeting by taking on tasks
- Summer Duties: admissions support, ongoing committee projects, and other tasks; meets when needed

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree (or equivalent)
- 3+ years experience teaching at the lower elementary
- Knowledge of child development
- Experience designing child-centered, age-appropriate, multi-sensory curriculum
- Experience implementing anti-bias approaches and curriculum
- Robust classroom management skills
- Ability to adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners
- Familiarity with social-emotional learning curricula and/or anti-bullying programs
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to be flexible

Preferred:

- Responsive Classroom experience
- Experience teaching lower elementary grades
- California Multiple-Subjects Credential
- Training in Orton-Gillingham or Science of Reading approach to literacy

Compensation:

This is a full-time salaried position

\$77,163.15/ 12-month salary

Benefits include Health, Vision, Dental, Retirement contribution, 11 PTO days

For more information about Walden, see our website: www.waldencenterschool.org.

Please send a resume and cover letter addressing your philosophy of education to [hiring@waldencenterschool.org](mailto: hiring@waldencenterschool.org) and add "Lower Middle Group Teacher Hiring" to the subject line.