



**RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL**  
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## Director of Advancement

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*River Valley School is an independent school providing unparalleled education and character development for children from pre-Junior Kindergarten to grade 6. Our vision is to curate opportunities for learning and discovery that are as dynamic as the world around us. We are a growing school with approximately 250 students within Bowness, Calgary, Alberta.*

*As an inclusive, private school that doesn't test for entrance, we welcome students who are gifted to those with learning or attention challenges. River Valley School students experience opportunities for hands-on learning and connections with the real world. We focus on high student achievement, but also on supporting the individual and their overall well-being and development. We are not a one-size-fits-all school. How we teach our students is determined by who they are, how they learn, and what engages them.*

*River Valley School is seeking a dedicated, adaptable and passionate Director of Advancement to join our close-knit and dynamic team.*

### **Overview:**

River Valley School is at a crucial point in its history, with the development of a new strategic plan underway, a capital campaign ready to launch, a passionate senior leadership team, and exceptional faculty and staff. River Valley School is therefore seeking a Director of Advancement – a new position - to continue to build its philanthropic, alumni relations and community relations activities in pursuit of strategic plan goals.

The Director of Advancement is a vital member of the Senior Leadership Team and is responsible for all aspects of Advancement at River Valley School. The incumbent will be a key contributor to achieving River Valley School's strategic



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priorities by working collaboratively with other stakeholders in implementing and fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment.

The Director of Advancement will be an outstanding ambassador for RVS and represent the school as a senior member of RVS leadership at advancement and community relations forums.

Reporting directly to the Head of School the Director of Advancement is bound by standards of conduct expected of a caring, knowledgeable, and reasonable adult who is in the presence of students or children. Actions must be bound in moral, ethical, and legal considerations regarding their obligation to students, parents, administrators, school authorities, communities, and society at large. We expect you to acknowledge these obligations and act accordingly.

### **Director of Advancement Responsibilities**

This newly created position is an incredible opportunity for an experienced professional who is keen to build and strengthen a program with tremendous potential. An energetic and driven individual with a passion for education will see this position as an opportunity to:

- Take ownership of an emerging advancement program
- Work with a passionate Head and leadership team and student families
- Craft the Advancement plan based on fulfilling the new Strategic Plan goals
- Leverage keen family interests in strengthening the success of the school
- Set the stage for ongoing and future capital enhancements and projects, including possible capital and/or comprehensive campaign(s)

A key collaborator across school areas, the Director of Advancement works closely with the Head of School, the Board of Governors, volunteer committees and the Senior Leadership Team in growing and nurturing the culture of philanthropy in the school community. The Director will work alongside the Directors of Marketing and Communications, Enrolment Management and Finance and will represent the



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school at a variety of events and activities within and outside of the River Valley School community.

More specifically, the Director will:

### **Fund-raising**

- Design, implement, and manage, in collaboration with the Head of School, a comprehensive development program to successfully raise annual, capital, student award and endowment funding
- Research and produce proposals for potential donors and negotiate and prepare subsequent donation agreements.
- Develop and cultivate relationships with the school's top prospects
- Support and guide the Head of School's Advancement activities
- Lead all strategies, planning, and execution of River Valley School's major fundraising campaigns, including case development, volunteer recruitment and training, donor engagement, and external consultant relationships as necessary
- Develop appropriate and effective donor stewardship and recognition strategies and activities
- Develop meaningful and warm relationships with the River Valley School staff and faculty, working to ensure a culture of philanthropy and transparency in fundraising efforts, goals, and needs
- Ensure River Valley School has a robust and effective donor prospect research program
- Establish and monitor performance metrics, including fundraising activity and financial targets
- Develop planned giving opportunities, including overseeing, managing, and/or planning advancement events
- Explore new best practices and fundraising trends and opportunities, and their applicability to River Valley School
- Maintain accountability standards to donors and ensure compliance with code of ethical principles and standards of professional conduct for fundraising executives



## Alumni Relations

- Work closely with the Director of Enrolment Management to develop and implement an Alumni Relations program,
- Play a leadership role fostering collaborations between alumni families and internal partners to optimize alumni engagement with the school
- Encourage alumni engagement as volunteers and as contributors to the school and explore ways to leverage opportunities for the school's graduates through the alumni network

## School Leadership

- Embrace the mission and daily experience of River Valley School, becoming familiar with the school's history, and living its vision, mission and values
- Assist with the collaborative development of institutional messaging on a broad range of topics to internal and external audiences (employees, students, alumni, community stakeholders, corporate partners, etc.) to create positive awareness of and support for RVS and its mission. Acts as an advocate and champion of River Valley School's values, and principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- As a member of the school's Leadership Team, participates in the overall leadership and management of River Valley School
- Collaborate on advancement marketing and promotion strategies with the Director of Marketing and Communications
- Partner to develop a strong fundraising brand, implement digital and analog fundraising tools, and engage the greater community through thoughtful and regular communications
- Represent the school on campus and in the community to build a strong network of philanthropic support
- Work closely and in concert with the Director of Enrolment Management to engage new families when they join the River Valley School community



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## Administration

- Create and manage the advancement budget in coordination with the Director of Finance and Head of School
- Work with the administration team to ensure the integrity of the school's database
- Assume responsibility for all administrative aspects of giving including receipting and donor payments, delegating to team members and partnering with the Director of Finance as required
- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place and compliance with all relevant regulations and laws

## QUALIFICATIONS

River Valley School is seeking a candidate with significant experience in a fundraising leadership role, ideally in an independent school or not-for-profit organization. Knowledge of the independent school culture and environment, and/or a willingness to embrace them are strongly valued. The ideal candidate will have demonstrated the ability to establish, develop, and maintain meaningful and authentic relationships with prospects, donors, parents, alumni, volunteers, and other constituents to strengthen relationships and grow financial support. They will be a self-starter and have demonstrated experience building a program to success, through strategic planning and thoughtful execution. Credible leadership in creating and promoting a culture of philanthropy is highly sought and extensive knowledge of Canadian fundraising principles and best practices is a strong asset.

In addition, the successful candidate will possess:

- An undergraduate degree in: Commerce, Business Administration, Communications or a related field from a recognized post-secondary institution. A certificate in Fund Raising Management is considered an asset.



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- 5+ years of related experience in fundraising, preferably in an independent school or non-profit environment.
- 3+ years at a management/supervisory level, with practical experience in strategic planning, budgeting, and mentoring.
- Demonstrated experience in managing at a senior level where significant critical analysis and judgment is required.
- Superior written and oral communication skills.
- Highly developed listening skills, which are required to deal with sensitive individual situations.
- Strong client focus and interpersonal skills, with a demonstrated ability to develop and nurture positive working relationships. The incumbent will have a high degree of self-motivation and business acumen.
- Excellent organizational, analytical, and planning skills with an ability to prioritize and manage multiple tasks and a variety of demands.
- Commitment to maintain confidentiality and a high degree of accuracy in all the school's donor records.
- Aptitude for the management and effective use of information systems within an advancement program
- Working knowledge of Google Products, Zoom, and the capacity to work on multiple platforms.
- A combination of relevant education and experience applicable to the position may be considered.
- A satisfactory criminal records check is a condition of employment with RVS.