



GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL

Chief Financial Officer
Georgetown Day School
Washington, D.C.

THE SEARCH

Georgetown Day School (GDS) – one of the nation’s most respected independent schools, recognized for its commitment to academic excellence and progressive education – seeks an experienced and sophisticated finance and administrative leader to serve as its next Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The School’s financial position is strong and steady, and the new CFO will inherit a team dedicated to building on this foundational strength to ensure best-in-class financial stewardship and clear, efficient systems across the institution. The new CFO will also have the exciting opportunity to partner with a new Head of School, slated to begin in fall 2026, to help lead GDS into its next chapter.

Founded in 1945 as the first racially integrated school in Washington, D.C., GDS was established as a school where children from across the Washington area could learn together in diverse groups, be joyful in their learning, and aspire to have a meaningful impact locally, nationally, and globally. This founding vision remains at the heart of the School’s identity and purpose today. The School has a strong foundation and is well-positioned for the future, with a robust demand for admission and strong student retention, a recently completed AIMS accreditation (2024), a newly unified campus, and a strong financial position with a growing endowment. The current strategic plan, [*Audacious Beginnings, Bold Futures*](#), was completed in 2024 and outlines four guiding priorities for GDS’s next chapter: (i) purposeful, joyful, and integrated education; (ii) thriving educators; (iii) equitable access and long-term sustainability; and (iv) innovation and reinvention. GDS offers a rigorous, inquiry-based program led by 230 full-time educators with an average tenure of 15 years. Students experience small classes, extensive co-curricular opportunities, and an ethos that values self-reflection, respectful dialogue, high academic standards, and ethical leadership. With over 1,000 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, GDS draws from all eight wards of D.C., as well as surrounding communities in Maryland and Virginia. The School’s newly unified campus in Northwest Washington, D.C. fosters a joyful and inclusive learning environment that pairs academic excellence and rigor with social impact, empowering students to ask hard questions, solve complex problems, and lead with purpose.

With consistent enrollment demand, significant strategic real estate assets, and a dedicated alumni base, GDS’s financial position is strong. The CFO will be a critical partner to the new Head of School, the senior leadership team, and the Board of Trustees, as well as an important resource to all faculty, staff, students, and families, providing leadership and expertise for all short- and long-term financial planning and

decision-making. The CFO manages an annual budget exceeding \$63 million and currently leads a team of 8 direct reports across the business office, operations, human resources, food services, student health, and data management. The CFO will be a change leader and systems thinker, overseeing complex operational units with a strong Director of Operations and Innovation; advancing strategies for campus maintenance and improvement; playing a key role in translating GDS's strategic plan into actionable financial, operational, and master plans; and progressing the School's financial model to prioritize long-term sustainability. As a vital member of the GDS community, the CFO will possess the interpersonal skills to successfully connect and collaborate with a wide range of highly engaged stakeholders. As the leader of a large team, the CFO will be a strong and supportive manager, modeling a culture of accountability, transparency, and high-quality service. Finally, they will bring a deep appreciation of GDS's mission and its commitment to academic excellence and will uphold GDS's culture of integrity, community, engagement, and inclusivity.

Georgetown Day School has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this important recruitment. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications to the search firm, as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL

History

Georgetown Day School was founded in 1945, as the first integrated school in Washington, D.C., by seven families who wanted to create a school committed not only to academic excellence and educational innovation, but also to a value system emphasizing appreciation and respect for others. Believing that diversity was the very ground out of which all deep and rich learning occurs, its founders envisioned a school in which children would learn joyfully, be meaningfully challenged, and have their education prepare them to engage as changemakers locally, nationally, and even globally. They established GDS as a school where children [master key skills](#), driving a love of learning and the capacity to make a positive impact on the world. Today, the School's philosophy, programs, and position in the national educational landscape strongly reflect its roots. Having grown from 12 children in 1945 to over 1,000 students in pre-K–12 today, GDS is recognized as one of Washington, D.C.'s and the nation's most dynamic educational institutions and a leader in progressive education.

Finances

In FY2025, GDS's operating budget was \$63 million. At the most recent fiscal year end (June 30, 2025), its net assets totaled \$331 million, and its endowment and related funds were valued at \$112 million. Looking ahead, the School is focused on ensuring long-term financial sustainability through continued cultivation of a culture of philanthropy among alumni, proactive and strategic financial management, and the potential for modest growth in enrollment as well. Ensuring GDS's deep and abiding commitment to

financial accessibility, a generous financial aid program, and serving a diverse student body is of critical importance, especially in light of recent challenges in the D.C. market.

Facilities

GDS is located in the Tenleytown neighborhood of Washington, D.C. The city campus includes a Lower/Middle School building (completed in 2020), a High School building, and flexible athletic and playground areas. Looking forward, under the tenure of a new Head and new CFO, GDS is planning for the continued evolution of its facilities, to include a High School renovation and the possibility of an expanded footprint utilizing existing, unused property across the street.

Strategic Plan

As GDS approached its 80th anniversary in 2025, the School community engaged in a comprehensive and inclusive process to reflect on its journey and history and envision what's next. [*Audacious Beginnings, Bold Futures*](#), ratified in summer 2024, provides a compass for the School's future anchored by four waypoints: (i) purposeful, joyful, and integrated education; (ii) thriving educators; (iii) equitable access and long-term sustainability; and (iv) innovation and reinvention.

School Community

At GDS, everyone addresses each other by their first names, indicating that all community members have equal access to one another, regardless of age, title, or station. For the 2024-25 school year, the School served 1,071 students – 508 High School, 302 Middle School, and 261 Lower School students. Forty-seven percent of the School's students identify as people of color. For the 2024-25 school year, GDS allocated \$9.8 million in financial aid to 24% of students with an average award of \$36,000. GDS employs 230 full-time faculty members who are deeply committed to the School, with an average tenure at GDS of 15 years.

Academics and Student Life

A GDS education engages students with real-world problems, places them at the center of their learning, teaches them to collaborate across differences, empowers them to connect with resources, challenges them to think critically and creatively, and prepares them to be active global citizens. GDS graduates leave the School with a love of learning, an abhorrence of bigotry and intolerance, a broad and well-rounded fund of knowledge, the ability to engage in the great conversations of life, and the willingness and capacity to bring needed change to a troubled world. The comprehensive, progressive curriculum is known for experiential and hands-on learning, college-prep level math and STEM courses, and innovative programming. With an average student-to-teacher ratio of 7:1, GDS teachers focus on providing an individualized education for each child, from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The High School is college preparatory, sending 100% of its graduates to colleges and universities worldwide.

GDS supports students in exploring programs of study that foster a deep appreciation for the arts, humanities, and sciences as equally valuable disciplines, offering diverse perspectives on the world. From an early age, students engage in equity and identity work, reflecting GDS's commitment to social justice and inclusivity. This integration is evident in events like the "Telling Their Story" project, which allows sixth graders to present curated family narratives through artifacts, deepening their understanding of personal and cultural identities. GDS emphasizes student voice and agency, which is evident in town meetings, student councils, and curriculum design.

More than 60 student-led clubs span a wide range of interests from environmental activism and mock trial to robotics, art publications, and cultural affinity groups. Students also participate in annual equity conferences, spirit days, arts showcases, and service-learning events that reflect the School's values. In the arts, GDS is known for its celebrated theater program, award-winning jazz band, and vibrant visual arts curriculum. Younger students learn varied skills through a comprehensive physical education program, and older students can compete in over 50 athletic teams across 19 sports, with championship teams in basketball, soccer, tennis, and ultimate frisbee.

Leadership Transition

After 16 years of extraordinary leadership, Russell Shaw will conclude his tenure as Head of School at the end of the 2025-26 academic year. The search for his successor is underway and slated to conclude in fall 2025. Once a Head-Elect is named, they will play a key role in the CFO search and ultimate hire.

For more information about Georgetown Day School, please visit: www.gds.org.

THE ROLE OF THE CFO

Reporting directly to the Head of School, the CFO serves as a key member of the senior leadership team and oversees a broad portfolio that stewards GDS's significant financial and physical assets, thus impacting and supporting every aspect of school life. The full portfolio includes eight direct reports and approximately 45 full- and part-time staff across the business office (accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, budget), human resources (hiring, benefits, onboarding), food services (outsourced), the student health department (school nurses, athletic trainers), data management, and operations services. One of the CFO's direct reports, the Director of Operations and Innovation, leads the operations services teams, including IT, facilities, security, transportation, security, sustainability, and auxiliary programs. The CFO also serves as the liaison to the audit, finance, and investment advisory subcommittee and in conjunction with the Director of Operations and Innovation supports the facilities master planning committees of the Board of Trustees.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW CFO

The incoming Chief Financial Officer should be prepared to address the following institutional priorities:

Develop and articulate a long-term financial plan for GDS in collaboration with a new Head of School, the leadership team, and the Board of Trustees

In joining GDS, the CFO will serve as a strong partner to a brand-new Head of School, fellow senior school leaders, and the Board to bring vision and strategic thinking to the financial and operational management of the School. The CFO will lead and manage the annual budgeting process, collaborating closely with school leaders to set parameters, articulate priorities, and prepare and present the budget for Board approval. The CFO will ensure financial best practices are in place across the board, will offer new approaches to advance GDS's business functions over the short- and long-term, and will possess the financial acumen to articulate the impact of major programmatic decisions on the School's financial future. They will serve as the resident expert concerning financial and operational issues facing independent schools and be knowledgeable about trends facing the field. Specifically, the CFO will leverage their financial acumen to support decision-making related to tuition and financial aid, enrollment, endowment management, fundraising, programming, staffing, deferred maintenance, and capital planning, among other important financial and operational considerations. To successfully guide the implementation of new processes and initiatives brought upon by these strategic conversations, the CFO will need to leverage strong change management and communications skills, ensuring buy-in across the campus community.

Strategically link master planning with long-term financial planning

A key element of GDS's long-term financial strategy is master planning. The CFO will partner closely with the Director of Operations and Innovation on campus master planning, providing financial analysis and long-term budget modeling to support strategic facilities decisions and ensure alignment with the School's financial sustainability goals. Specifically, the School anticipates a renovation of the High School in the coming years, and there is also the opportunity to further develop property across the street and leverage the School's real estate assets in creative ways. The CFO, in close collaboration with the Head, Board, and leadership team will have the exciting opportunity to help design GDS's campus of the future through master planning that thoughtfully addresses the School's built, natural, academic, and communal environments while keeping financial sustainability at the forefront of all key decisions.

Continue to modernize and professionalize processes and systems

While the CFO will inherit a financially sound school with significant assets, there is a need to further articulate, refine, and update processes, policies, and systems across the finance and operations functions. The CFO, in collaboration with their team, will need to assess and modernize business and financial systems, leveraging operational expertise in systems implementation and organizational efficiency to ensure right-sized solutions for GDS. The CFO should be a systems thinker and adept at change management, able to both understand and assess the current way things operate at GDS while also looking to build new, more efficient, perhaps automated, processes and workflows. The CFO will prioritize ensuring tighter internal controls and professionalizing the office in a way that allows the day-to-day work to hum along, freeing up time and bandwidth for more proactive, strategic thinking.

Lead, manage, and empower a strong team and build team capacity

The CFO will inherit a dedicated and talented staff, many of whom are new to GDS in the last few years, and they will prioritize supporting, mentoring, and developing them as both individuals and as a team. The CFO will foster a culture that is grounded in GDS's values and emphasizes creativity, flexibility, accountability, and collaboration to provide the highest level of service to the School and its ultimate mission. The successful candidate will bring an understanding of best practices across finance and operations to ensure the structure of the entire portfolio makes sense for the GDS of today and the future, serves institutional strategic goals, and is appropriately staffed and supported. The CFO must have the capacity to both operate at a high strategic level and delegate with trust and confidence to their team, while still being knowledgeable enough about the details and willing to roll up their sleeves to dig into aspects of the work alongside staff.

Build and cultivate a culture of financial stewardship across the School community

Success in this role hinges on strong relationship and capacity building across the entirety of the GDS community. The CFO will be a visible and key senior school leader who must develop collaborative working relationships with stakeholders across the School and serve as a thought partner and leader to support existing and emerging initiatives. The CFO should possess a sense of curiosity and genuine appreciation for the School's academic and extracurricular offerings, taking the time to ask questions and learn about the wide-ranging needs and goals of different units and departments. The CFO must be a clear communicator and active listener with the approachability and patience to present complex financial information and operational processes and policies to a wide variety of audiences while being open and receptive to feedback. Continued training for budget managers in addition to general education and training opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators on school finances is essential to developing a stronger culture of prudent financial stewardship and shared responsibility at GDS.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no one candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal attributes:

- A deep appreciation and respect for Georgetown Day School's history and founding mission;
- A record of successful financial and administrative leadership and management at a large scale and level of complexity, and the capacity to manage diverse functional areas and teams;
- Excellent financial and business skills that enable visionary, creative, and proactive approaches to complex financial management situations;
- Strong operational leadership and change management experience;
- Confident decision-making skills with an inclusive, transparent, collaborative, and decisive leadership style and experience making difficult decisions;
- Excellent communication and diplomacy skills that inspire trust and collaboration;

- An understanding of nonprofit and independent school finances and the trends facing the field; and
- Integrity of the highest order, superior emotional intelligence, and a strong work ethic.

COMPENSATION

The annual salary and benefits will be consistent with the market for similar roles in the area. The anticipated annual salary range for this position is \$235,000 to \$310,000. Georgetown Day School provides this salary as a good-faith estimate of the annual salary range for the position of CFO based on comparable roles and market conditions in the region. GDS offers generous healthcare and other benefits to all employees and values its rich intellectual and inclusive culture.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the search process is completed. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent in confidence via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/georgetown-day-school/chief-financial-officer>.

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