



Director of Educational Technology & Chair of the Computer Science Department
Ransom Everglades School
Miami, FL

The mission of Ransom Everglades School is to provide an educational environment in which the pursuit of honor, academic excellence and intellectual growth is complemented by the concern for the physical, cultural and character development of each student.

THE SEARCH

Ransom Everglades School (RE), a top-tier independent day school in the Miami-Coconut Grove area, seeks a forward-thinking, collaborative, and strategic leader to serve as its first-ever Director of Educational Technology & Chair of the Computer Science Department (the Director). Blending curricular innovation with IT management, this leader will play a key role in academic life at the school and, as a teacher by training, will simultaneously chair the Computer Science Department; they will split their time relatively evenly across both roles. In particular, they will focus on integrating technology in ways that enhance excellent teaching and learning, continue to develop digital literacy among the school community, and regularly evaluate emerging tools in the space. This is an exciting opportunity to partner with key stakeholders across RE to shape educational technology at a rapidly evolving moment in schools.

Located on the shores of Biscayne Bay, Ransom Everglades serves 1,246 students in grades 6-12 and is spread across two campuses: a Middle School and an Upper School. This position will work across the entire 6-12 continuum and will ensure an integrated and state-of-the-art experience for students. Over the past few years, RE has introduced several pathbreaking initiatives, including The Constance & Miguel Fernandez STEM Center, recognized as one of the most innovative STEM facilities in the country and a hub for interdisciplinary work. The three-story, 45,000 square-foot, glass-walled center exemplifies future-ready design with smart-building technology, sustainable features, flexible learning spaces, a maker space, and laboratories. The School also launched the Artificial Intelligence Ransom Everglades (AIRE) Task Force, which aims to prepare students for a world in which AI tools are ubiquitous.

The successful candidate will balance a compelling vision with practical implementation. They will be a student-first leader with a record of collaborating across divisions or departments and explaining educational technology to lay audiences and school leadership. Specifically, the Director will: define strategic priorities for educational technology at RE; engage with the school community to advance digital literacy; serve as a partner on AI in the classroom; collaborate with Technology Services to ensure

cohesion between ed tech and general technology tools; and teach students and lead faculty as Inaugural Chair of the Computer Science Department.

Ransom Everglades School has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Please direct all confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY & CHAIR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

The Director will promote a culture of digital innovation across RE and will stay abreast of national and international trends and key issues, ensuring that RE continues to be a leading voice in the independent school landscape. They will report to the Director of Teaching and Learning. They will serve on the Artificial Intelligence Ransom Everglades (AIRE) Task Force and the upcoming Data Governance Committee, expected to launch next year.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The inaugural Director will tackle the following opportunities and challenges:

Define strategic priorities for educational technology at RE

In close consultation with department chairs, the computer science faculty, and other key academic leaders, the Director will think strategically about the future of educational technology at RE, ensuring that the school pursues a mission-aligned, cohesive action plan across the Middle and Upper Schools. The Director will assess the current ed tech landscape at RE, considering successful initiatives at prominent schools across the country and ways in which RE might take inspiration from those peers—and inspire them in turn. By surveying the landscape internally and externally, they will collaborate with faculty and school leadership to define strategic priorities for the short and long term and build out RE's capacity to deliver on those initiatives. This work will build on RE's current tech audit, which will enter its second phase in Spring 2026. The tech audit is focusing on existing—and needed—systems and procedures across RE, the need to robustly support faculty and staff in current and new technologies, and the future of data governance.

Engage with the school community to advance digital literacy

RE has championed experiential, hands-on learning since its founding. In the ensuing years, the academic program has evolved to increasingly integrate interdisciplinary collaborations and real-world applications. The Director will partner with faculty to provide professional development and ongoing support related to educational technology, with particular focus on curriculum design, assessment, and differentiated instruction. They will educate faculty and students on the benefits and risks of emerging technologies,

advising them on available tools and their ethical implications. Notably, the Director will be open to community viewpoints, questions, and concerns and will be transparent and inclusive in sharing feedback as RE refines its approach.

Serve as a partner on AI in the classroom

The incoming Director will embrace AI as a feature, not a bug. They will serve on the Artificial Intelligence Ransom Everglades Task Force (AIRE), formed in Spring 2023. Led by the Chair of the Humanities Department, AIRE includes faculty and staff members from the Humanities, STEM, World Languages, and Technology Services. Following AIRE's faculty-wide presentation at the end of Spring 2023, the initiative is now entering its second phase: widespread, bottom-up, course-by-course change. Faculty in every discipline are adapting their curricula to a new reality in which AI tools are not just ubiquitous but embedded into nearly every piece of software that students use. RE believes that students should possess a sense of agency over their learning, and that includes effective use of AI when tempered by academic integrity. In the 2026-2028 school year, RE will offer several new, AI-related courses, on the cutting edge of independent schools, and must consider the continued evolution of the curriculum as it pertains to AI. The new Director will be a critical voice in these ongoing efforts, leading with practicality, grit, strategy, and optimism.

Collaborate with Technology Services to ensure cohesion between ed tech and general technology tools

The Director will collaborate extensively with the six-person Technology Services team, understanding the overlap between ed tech and the school's general technology infrastructure. The Director will consider technology upgrades related to infrastructure, network, and hardware that impact the use of educational technology in classrooms. They will ensure a consistent cadence for evaluating emerging and existing tools, taking into account cost, efficacy, student safety, and privacy protection, and will sunset tools as they become outdated or obsolete. They will understand that the quality of RE's ed tech offerings directly impacts the quality of its academic program and will thus continue to champion a best-in-class ecosystem.

Teach students and lead faculty as Inaugural Chair of the Computer Science Department

RE is creating the school's first-ever, stand-alone Computer Science Department, which this person will chair. The Computer Science Department is currently combined with the Mathematics Department. By breaking away Computer Science, the Director will lead and teach in a trend-setting department, maintaining a presence in the classroom and building credibility with the faculty as they champion new technology. The Director will harness the highly applicable knowledge of the Computer Science faculty, leveraging expertise relevant to educational technology and recognizing that their work must fundamentally serve student learning and success. The successful hire will want to be a true member of the RE community, maintaining high visibility and presence with faculty and staff and participating in the general life of the school.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no candidate will embody every quality, ideal candidates will bring many of the following professional skillsets and attributes:

- Sophisticated understanding of educational technology trends;
- A track record of assessing and improving existing technology, as informed by best practices at peer institutions;
- Knowledge of best-in-class pedagogy and understanding of the key issues facing faculty in the realm of ed tech;
- Familiarity with the requirements and processes related to vetting new technology and introducing it to a school community;
- A sense of gravitas and excellent interpersonal, analytical, and presentation skills;
- Ability to work effectively in an organization with diverse stakeholders and perspectives;
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity and fostering an equitable environment;
- Ethical understanding;
- Ability to lead with core values and The RE Way;
- Knowledge of Blackbaud;
- An enthusiasm for charting the course of a new, evolving role in a complex and ever-changing niche;
- A Master's degree in a related field or significant on-the-ground experience in ed tech.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website via the link below.

Dan Rodas, Partner
Berkley Braden, Managing Associate
Mia Carpiello, Senior Associate
Nicole Sancilio, Managing Search Coordinator

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/ransom-everglades/director-ed-tech>

Ransom Everglades School (RE) provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, RE complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which RE has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. RE expressly prohibits

any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Ransom Everglades School. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Ransom Everglades School would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

Appendix

RANSOM EVERGLADES SCHOOL

History

In the early nineteen-hundreds, Paul C. Ransom founded an Adirondack-Florida School to provide students the opportunity to split their education between an old logging camp in the mountains of New York and Pine Knot Camp on the shore of Biscayne Bay. Mr. Ransom's values of self-reliance, public service, and developing multiple forms of intelligence were the crux of this migratory boarding school. Each campus emphasized a student's relationship between learning and nature. In 1949, the Adirondack-Florida School moved to Coconut Grove permanently and was renamed the Ransom School for Boys.

In 1955, the Everglades School for Girls was created only two miles from the Ransom School. The founders of this school shared core values with Mr. Ransom, believing in experiential learning and the value of community involvement. Unlike many other schools of that era, the Everglades School for Girls did not discriminate based on race, religion, or social status. In 1974, the two institutions merged to form the Ransom Everglades School. The Everglades campus on Silver Bluff became the middle school; the Ransom campus on Biscayne Bay housed the upper school. In the years since, RE has become one of America's preeminent independent day schools, with Paul Ransom's ideals remaining ever present in the school today. Reflective of RE's impressive trajectory, in 2024, [Spear's Magazine](#) named Ransom Everglades one of the top 10 best private schools in the nation and one of the top 100 in the world.

Leadership

Rachel Rodriguez, Head of School

Mrs. Rachel Rodriguez, Head of School, joined the Ransom Everglades community in 2005 as Assistant Director of the Middle School. Two years into that role, she stepped up to serve as Head of the Middle School and led in that capacity for the next 14 years. During Mrs. Rodriguez's middle school tenure at RE, she taught English each year, helped create the middle school advisory program, led tours of the middle school for prospective families, and prioritized the wellbeing of her students.

Mrs. Rodriguez worked as an educational consultant during the 2021-2022 school year before she was tapped to return to Ransom Everglades as the Interim Head of School in the 2022-2023 school year. Following a national search, Mrs. Rodriguez was selected to serve in the permanent Head of School role in 2023. Throughout her time in leadership at Ransom Everglades, Mrs. Rodriguez has continued to lead and uphold RE's rich history of excellence. As Head of School, she has set forth a new set of core values

for the school, [The RE Way](#), which includes support and community, diversity and inclusion, honor and excellence, service and outreach, and joy and wellbeing.

Prior to RE, Mrs. Rodriguez worked in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools for 15 years as a teacher, English Department chair, Exceptional Education Department co-chair, and education specialist. Mrs. Rodriguez graduated from Florida International University with a Bachelor of Science and from Nova Southeastern University with a Master of Science. In 2018, she completed a Certificate in Advanced Education Leadership from Harvard Graduate School of Professional Education.

David Clark, Chief Operating Officer

David Clark '86, Chief Operating Officer, is a proud Ransom Everglades alumnus with deep ties to the community. Mr. Clark rejoined Ransom Everglades in 2022 to serve as Interim Head of Upper School and Chief Operating Officer. As COO, Mr. Clark oversees RE's athletics, admission, advancement, and business offices. In his role, Mr. Clark is heavily focused on ensuring that all students feel included and supported in the Ransom Everglades community.

Mr. Clark graduated from Dartmouth College with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics, modified with Engineering, and had the opportunity to play in the NFL with the Cincinnati Bengals. After a career-ending injury, Mr. Clark returned to RE to work in the mathematics and computer science department, later taking the roles of dean of students and head football coach. After eight years at RE, Mr. Clark then joined Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale, FL, where he served as dean of students, assistant upper school head, and interim upper school head. From 2014 until his departure to RE in 2022, Mr. Clark served as Head of School for Pine Crest School on the Boca Raton campus.

Mrs. Rodriguez and Mr. Clark work collaboratively with one another to serve the needs of the greater RE community and lead the school with a team-based approach and a 13-person leadership team. Together, they are highly engaged with RE students and families to ensure their success during and following their RE experience.

Jessica (Jess) Merrick, Director of Teaching and Learning

Jess Merrick is Director of Teaching and Learning and supports a cohesive, skills-based, and student-centered approach to teaching across grades 6–12. She simultaneously teaches an AP math class and coaches competitive math teams, including the Florida MathCounts National Team, which she led to a first-place finish. Mrs. Merrick was honored as the MathCounts Coach of the Year and received the Edyth May Sliffe Award from the American Mathematics Association for excellence in math education.

Before joining Ransom Everglades, Mrs. Merrick served as Math Department Chair at Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School and worked as a management consultant for PwC/IBM, leading strategic projects for Fortune 500 clients. She holds an MEd in Education Leadership from Harvard University and graduated

summa cum laude, with a BS in Finance and Marketing, from Boston College. She recently attended Stanford University as a Distinguished Career Fellowship Partner focused on educational technology.

Board of Trustees

Ransom Everglades School is governed by a Board of Trustees of 29 members, each serving initial, three-year terms. The Board's by-laws clearly define the roles and responsibilities of Trustees, with the Board assuming fiduciary and policy-setting responsibility. The Board convenes nine standing committees to advance its work.

School Community

Ransom Everglades is home to 1,1246 students, grades 6-12, spread across a Middle School and an Upper School. In a diverse and inclusive community, over 59 percent of students identify as multicultural, and 20 percent speak a language other than English at home. In a community environment that values diversity and inclusion, RE promotes leadership, resilience, and service to others.

At the heart of the RE academic experience are the distinguished members of the faculty, who share the highest standards of classroom teaching and, in many cases, hold advanced degrees in their fields. The average length of service for Ransom Everglades faculty is 19 years, with approximately thirty percent being faculty of color. Many faculty members also serve as student advisors. Students are assigned an advisor in ninth grade and continue with the same advisor all four years, with the advisor providing course selection guidance in addition to being a trusted resource and mentor.

Ransom Everglades requires every student to master basic sailing, canoeing, and kayaking skills to graduate. One of the most distinctive aspects of Ransom Everglades' experiential pedagogy is the annual Outward Bound program for ninth graders. Preparation for Outward Bound is part of the ninth grade Bay Studies curriculum and includes instruction in canoeing and the use of a map and compass.

RE also provides a unique and intensive language program that requires all students to obtain a level four proficiency in Spanish, Portuguese, French, or Chinese. Many students take AP Spanish in the eighth grade, leading the way for additional language proficiency in the upper school. RE also offers rising seniors an opportunity to apply for fellowships that support summer projects and an independent study for credit program, connecting students with a faculty mentor.

With academic excellence at the forefront, members of the Class of 2024 have taken 594 AP exams, with 87 percent of students earning a 3 or better. The mean SAT score is an impressive 705 for Reading and 703 for Math; the mean ACT composite is 32. Notably, the Class of 2024 boasted 16 Commended Scholars. RE students become Presidential Scholars; start their own non-profits; win national prizes for photography, robotics, and debate; and compete at regional, state, and national levels of athletics. RE has

24 varsity sports and is also known for its remarkable arts program, which includes offerings such as symphonic band, jazz combo, strings ensemble, theatrical performances, studio art, and architectural modeling. Starting in grade seven, students engage in structured research projects across disciplines, resulting in the gathering and analyzing of data and the crafting of original work.

For more information about academics at Ransom Everglades, including Mrs. Rodriguez's academic vision and the School's approach to teaching and learning, please visit [RE's website](#). For more information on the grading scale and academic coursework, please refer to RE's [school profile](#).

Coconut Grove, FL

Coconut Grove—founded in 1873 by an eclectic mix of pioneers, artists, intellectuals, and adventurers—is the oldest neighborhood of Miami, located along the shores of Biscayne Bay just south of the city's downtown business district. Today, Coconut Grove is a sought-after residential community known for its diversity, as well as for its shops, restaurants, open-air cafes, parks and gardens, and year-round arts programming. With its waterfront on Biscayne Bay, this is also a popular boating, sailing, and fishing community.

A key attraction of Coconut Grove is easy access to the greater Miami and Miami Beach community. Miami is the fourth-largest urban area in the nation, home to over 6.1 million people. The majority of Miami's residents have emigrated—or are born to parents who emigrated—from countries in the Caribbean and Central and South America. The result is an eclectic community amidst a tropical landscape unlike any other in the United States. With a unique culture inspired by its climate, proximity to Central and South America, and financial prosperity, Miami is an exciting and increasingly international city and is a major hub for finance, commerce, media, entertainment, and the arts, and is beginning to emerge as a technology hub.

Downtown Miami features the largest concentration of international banks in the United States. The city is also home to the University of Miami, several hospitals, research centers, corporations, and recreational companies. Abundant cultural and artistic life, as well as plentiful outdoor recreational opportunities, make the area both vibrant and interesting.