

Established 1867

OLDFIELDS

S C H O O L

HEAD OF SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT



Established 1867

OLDFIELDS

S C H O O L

Established in 1867 by Anna Austen McCulloch, Oldfields School is an independent, non-sectarian college preparatory boarding and day school for girls in grades 8–12. Located on a picturesque 130-acre campus in Sparks Glencoe, Maryland, Oldfields has a longstanding tradition of fostering academic excellence, personal growth, and a strong sense of community.



MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Oldfields School's mission is to embrace each girl's authentic self, educate through collaboration, empower the individual voice, and inspire confidence and continual growth, leading to a life of purpose.

The school's motto, *Fortezza, Umiltade, e Largo Core*—Courage, Humility, and Largeness of Heart—encapsulates the core values that define the Oldfields experience. These principles are the foundation of our school community, ensuring that every student is genuinely known, heard, and supported.

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Oldfields School presents an unique opportunity for its new leader to engage in and advance the School's mission, signature programs, and its aspirational vision to redefine a girls' boarding and day school education in today's ever-changing world, balancing innovation with the rich, time-honored traditions of the School. Visitors to the School will experience something different about Oldfields School—its unpretentious nature and strong community spirit. Faculty, students, parents, and alumnae talk about the authentic relationships between students and faculty. It is not unusual to hear about the teachers who go out of their way to support and engage a student's interest.

Oldfields lives its student-centered philosophy in and out of the classroom, as adults and students create a true family-like community. Oldfields is committed to teachable moments as it expands the boundaries of the traditional academic classroom to include arts, athletics, character development, community and residential life, riding, and rich traditions carried through its long history. Students are part of an active learning community dedicated to engaging in self-discovery and to developing independent and collaborative learning experiences. Students are expected to acquire the skills and attitudes to support lifelong learning. At Oldfields, the faculty and staff put the School's mission, motto, and values into practice by providing a diverse, innovative, and deeply personalized educational experience.



SIGNATURE PROGRAMS:

Equine Science Concentration: Building on the school's historic equestrian tradition, this program offers courses such as Equine Science, Equine Anatomy & Physiology, History of Horse in Sport, Equine/Small Business Math, Stable & Horse Show Management, Grooming for Success, Nutrition & Horse Wellness, and Internship Opportunities.

Arts Concentration: Students can pursue an Arts Concentration by combining Oldfields coursework with a pilot externship at Manor Mill, a nearby community art center. This creative partnership has already drawn nearly 1,700 visitors to campus for concerts and plays, with Oldfields students gaining hands-on experience behind the scenes.

As part of the expanded Manor Mill and Practical Pathways programs, students will spend one day a week studying at the Mill or on campus in courses such as woodworking, stained glass, robotics, music, financial literacy, cooking, yoga, and more.

Pathways Program: This initiative provides students with essential life skills and career exploration opportunities. The Practical Pathway includes seminars on effective communication, health and wellness, finance, and civic responsibility. The Career Pathway connects students with alumnae and professionals to explore diverse career paths.

May Program: One of the hallmarks of an Oldfields education is our May Program—a two-week experiential learning experience that complements the academic curriculum. Officially inaugurated in 1971, this popular tradition is still perfectly aligned with our mission since each girl chooses an area to explore that sparks her interest.

Every year, students choose from diverse programs led by passionate faculty, exploring interests beyond the traditional curriculum. May Program takes them across town, the state, or the country, offering hands-on, horizon-expanding experiences.

Recent programs include:

Cultural: A Cultural Mosaic – from Poe to ponies, museums to music, exploring DC, Baltimore, Assateague, and Monkton with overnights in DC and Ocean City.

Creative: The Food Network – explore the restaurant world with a Delaware shore field trip, visit FOOD: Transforming the American Table at the National Museum of American History, and create menus, edible centerpieces, and unique dining experiences.

Outdoor: By Land or By Sea – hike the Appalachian Trail, kayak the Swatara, and explore Wye Island and Genesee Valley for a nature-driven adventure.

College Counseling takes an in-depth, multi-year approach with a primary focus on helping each student find the right fit—the college, university, gap year, or post-graduate career path that best meets the needs of the student. All Oldfields students take responsibility for their higher education plans with the support of the college counselor and faculty.

The next Head of School will partner with faculty and staff to rebuild and strengthen Oldfields' college preparatory program, refining its student-centered curriculum and teaching practices. As Oldfields works to reestablish itself as a leader in girls' boarding and day school education, the Head's active engagement in shaping and elevating the program will be critical to its success.



ATHLETICS, STUDENT LIFE AND TRADITIONS

The current Athletics program at Oldfields is growing, along with the enrollment. The program aims to promote personal growth and flexibility, allowing students to explore various interests. Current offerings include riding, basketball, cross country, volleyball, badminton, dance, fitness and conditioning, yoga, and pilates.

Riding has been a signature program at the School for well over 150 years and includes 24 school-owned horses, a state-of-the-art indoor arena, two outdoor rings, paddocks, and a cross-country course. Girls may bring their own horse to School, lease a school horse, or ride the horses within the program while they continue to develop their competitive riding skills.

Riders also have the opportunity to compete on our Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) hunt seat and dressage teams. Riders are offered multidisciplinary programs that include hunters, jumpers, cross country, eventing, equitation, foxhunting and dressage.

Community Service is also a graduation requirement. Fortezza, Umilitate, e Largo Core (Courage, Humility, and Largeness of Heart) is the motto and guide for all who join the Oldfields community. It began in the home of our founder, Anna Austen McCulloch, who, upon seeing a need to educate local children (girls in particular), opened her home to students. At Oldfields, each student makes a difference every day through becoming a conscientious citizen of the world, an engaged community member, and one who uses their gifts and voice to take action and better the lives of others.

We currently offer three-, five-, and seven-day boarding, alongside a day student community. Faculty share rotating responsibilities for supervising campus and residential life. Day students are deeply engaged in the community, often staying for evening study hours and spending weekends on campus. Each weekend offers a variety of student activities.

No conversation about the Oldfields experience is complete without a passionate discussion of traditions. At the start of the year, new students join either the Green or White team, building lifelong bonds and a friendly, competitive spirit. Big Sister/Little Sister, Green and White Night, At-Home Night with Advisors, Thing-a-ma-bob, 100 Nights Dinner, Garden Party, May Court, and white dresses on Graduation Hill are all cherished hallmarks. And, of course, alumnae will eagerly remind you of a few more!

Character, diversity, inclusion, and leadership are integral to the Oldfields experience. From advisory and daily morning meetings to countless moments in the classroom, on stage, in athletics and the riding ring, in the dining hall, across campus, and in the dormitories, the School's "hidden" program permeates every aspect of student life. The next Head of School will be expected to further develop this holistic program and serve as a strong, visible presence on campus—during the day, in the evenings, and on weekends.





ADMISSIONS, ALUMNAE AND DEVELOPMENT

Oldfields School is in a period of purposeful rebuilding following a near closure in 2023. With a current enrollment of approximately 30 students in grades 8–12, the School offers an extraordinary level of individualized attention and a deeply personalized educational experience. Every student is known and valued, and the tight-knit nature of the community fosters strong relationships and genuine belonging.

Students may choose from four enrollment options: day, three-day, five-day, or seven-day boarding. This flexibility allows families to select the experience that best fits their needs.

Admissions efforts are focused on mission-appropriate growth, with a strategic goal of increasing enrollment to 100 students by 2027. The School has recommitted to its founding mission and is attracting families who value a forward-looking academic program grounded in tradition, character, and care.

The next Head of School will work with the Oldfields community to fully articulate the School's program and differentiate the Oldfields promise. The Head of School will work with the admissions team to develop a comprehensive enrollment management program to cultivate a robust enrollment of mission-appropriate young women.

The next Head of School, in collaboration with the development office and the board, will want to actively engage with alumnae and parents to dramatically enhance philanthropic support for the School over the next decade. Building on the momentum of the ongoing BOLD Campaign—a multi-year effort to secure Oldfields' future through strengthened enrollment, expanded fundraising, and a renewed commitment to excellence—the Head of School will play a key role in fostering a culture of giving that ensures the School's long-term sustainability and growth. To support these goals, the next Head will need strong donor relationships and the ability to cultivate new philanthropic partnerships to support these goals.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Ansley Smithwick has served as Head of School since 2023, bringing a commitment to academic excellence and community engagement. The Board of Trustees, chaired by Dr. Barbara Baisley '88, comprises 11 individuals (alumnae, parents, and friends of the school) who provide strategic oversight and support.

The Head of School is supported in day-to-day operations by a streamlined and collaborative administrative team. Several administrators hold dual roles, reflecting the lean and hands-on structure. As Oldfields continues to rebuild and grow, the next Head of School will have the opportunity to assess the school's organizational structure, clarify responsibilities, and ensure that leadership roles align with both mission and operational needs. Continuing our culture of transparency, shared purpose, and distributed decision-making will be key to strengthening the administration and sustaining the School's forward momentum.

Oldfields School is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools (AIMS) and Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.



CAMPUS

Oldfields School is set on 130 acres in the heart of Maryland's horse country, just north of Baltimore and minutes from I-83. In 2024, the campus was placed under a permanent conservation easement, preserving its open space and natural beauty for generations to come.

The campus includes 16 buildings, two athletic fields, two outdoor riding rings, and a network of wooded trails. Old House—home to admissions, development, the Head's office and health center—anchors the historic heart of campus. Rodney Hall is the main academic building; the Commons houses the dining hall, day student lockers, lounges, and Herky's School Store. Facilities also include a full gymnasium with dance studio, barn, indoor riding arena, four dormitories (one currently in use), additional faculty housing, and a welcoming Head's residence.

Though set in a peaceful rural setting, the campus is highly accessible: just 6 miles from Hunt Valley's Light Rail station, 26 miles from Baltimore's Inner Harbor, 33 miles from BWI Airport, 65 miles from Washington, D.C., and 96 miles from Philadelphia.



INTERIM HEAD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE INTERIM HEAD OF OLDFIELDS SCHOOL

In light of the School's ongoing transformation, Oldfields is also searching for an Interim Head of School to lead during the 2026–2027 academic year and beyond, while the search for a permanent Head continues. The Interim Head will play a critical role in providing stability, maintaining momentum, and preparing the community for a successful long-term leadership transition. The challenges ahead include:

- Enrollment Growth – attracting the right mix of students, balancing financial aid with sustainability.
- Financial Stability – fundraising, capital campaign, and building endowment.
- Academic Strength – improving rigor, expanding courses, and restoring college-prep reputation.
- Faculty Retention – recruiting and keeping high-quality teachers.
- Facilities – major upgrades to dorms and campus infrastructure.
- Reputation & Identity – rebuilding alumnae confidence, clarifying mission, and competing with stronger peer schools.
- Cultural Climate – navigating social and political divides while maintaining community and traditions.
- Community & Wellbeing – ensuring strong student mental health, inclusion, and engagement.

Working in close partnership with the Board of Trustees and senior leadership team, the Interim Head will be expected to:

- Provide steady, visible leadership that builds confidence among students, families, faculty, staff, and alumnae;
- Preserve and nurture Oldfields' culture and traditions while ensuring forward progress in key strategic areas;
- Support enrollment and retention efforts through active engagement with prospective and current families;
- Guide faculty and staff with clarity, empathy, and a shared sense of purpose;
- Maintain fiscal discipline and operational oversight, ensuring the School remains on a sound financial footing;
- Serve as a bridge to the permanent Head, preparing the institution for a seamless handoff of leadership and positioning the next Head for success.

This period will be an opportunity for the Interim Head to strengthen the community's trust, maintain focus on strategic priorities, and ensure the School enters its next chapter on solid ground. The role will require a leader who can step in with confidence, adapt quickly, and inspire stability and optimism across the Oldfields community.

IDEAL INTERIM CANDIDATE ATTRIBUTES AND EXPERIENCES

The Interim Head of School will be a seasoned, mission-driven leader with the ability to step in quickly, assess needs with clarity, and lead with confidence. While the role is transitional, it requires someone fully committed to advancing the School's mission, supporting its people, and positioning Oldfields for long-term success.

The ideal candidate should demonstrate:

- Proven leadership in an independent or boarding school setting, with the ability to quickly build trust and credibility;
- A steady, reassuring presence that inspires confidence during times of transition;
- Strong operational and financial management skills, including budget oversight and resource alignment;
- Experience guiding faculty and staff through change while sustaining morale and focus;
- Skill in enrollment and retention strategies, with a willingness to be highly visible to prospective and current families;
- A collaborative approach to working with the Board of Trustees, senior leadership, and the broader community;
- Strong communication skills—clear, transparent, and tailored to a variety of audiences;
- Adaptability and decisiveness, with the ability to address immediate challenges while keeping an eye on long-term goals.

PERMANENT HEAD OF SCHOOL

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF OLDFIELDS SCHOOL

Oldfields School stands at a pivotal moment in its 158-year history. After narrowly avoiding closure in 2023, the School has embarked on a bold and hopeful chapter—rebuilding its enrollment, strengthening its programs, and reasserting the value of a deeply personalized girls' education in a complex and competitive landscape.

In partnership with the Board of Trustees, the next Head of School will be tasked with leading this transformation. It is both a rare opportunity and a serious challenge: to reinvigorate a historic institution, articulate a compelling vision for its future, and restore financial and programmatic stability through mission-driven leadership. Most importantly, the next Head must be fully committed to the ethos of Oldfields—where every girl is known, valued, and supported to grow in courage, humility, and largeness of heart.

Key Priorities for the Head of School

- Immersing fully in the day-to-day life of the school to understand and steward its unique culture and values;
- Supporting and developing a lean but deeply committed faculty and staff through clear expectations, shared purpose, and meaningful professional growth;
- Overseeing the financial and operational management of Oldfields, including budget oversight, financial reporting, facilities management, and risk management, while ensuring fiscal health and operational excellence in partnership with the Board and leadership team;
- Evaluating and refining the academic program to ensure it meets the needs of today's students while honoring the school's traditions;
- Fostering an inclusive, joyful, and mission-aligned community across students, faculty, families, and alumnae;
- Serving as a visible and engaged ambassador to prospective families, donors, and partners.

Challenges Ahead

- Enrollment Growth – attracting the right mix of students, balancing financial aid with sustainability;
- Facilities – major upgrades to dorms and campus infrastructure;
- Reputation & Identity – rebuilding alumnae confidence, clarifying mission, and competing with stronger peer schools;
- Cultural Climate – navigating social and political divides while maintaining community and traditions;
- Community & Wellbeing – ensuring strong student mental health, inclusion, and engagement.

Oldfields' next leader must be prepared to build trust, make tough decisions, and lead with optimism, transparency, and courage. This is a singular opportunity for an experienced, student-focused leader to shape the future of a school that has shown its resilience—and is ready for renewal.

IDEAL CANDIDATE ATTRIBUTES AND EXPERIENCES (PERMANENT HEAD)

The next Head of School will be an experienced, mission-driven leader who brings clarity of vision, strong execution, and a deep commitment to the Oldfields ethos. The ideal candidate should demonstrate:

- A proven ability to lead a student-centered academic program and recruit, retain, and support exceptional faculty and staff;
- Financial leadership equivalent to a CFO: including budgeting, cash flow management, long-term forecasting, and oversight of all business operations;
- Independent school administrative experience;
- Hands-on experience with boarding school culture;
- Marketing and Communications experience;
- Fundraising experience and the ability to build strong philanthropic partnerships;
- Experience in admissions and enrollment growth strategies;
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal, and follow-through skills;
- Strong written and verbal communication skills tailored to a range of audiences.

The next Head of School will be:

- Deeply committed to the growth, development, and learning of young women;
- A leader committed to transparency, accountability, and shared purpose;
- Engaged, visible, and accessible—to students, families, faculty, and alumnae;
- Passionate about all-girls education and the boarding school experience;
- A wise, balanced decision-maker with sound educational, social, and financial judgment;
- An active listener with strong emotional intelligence and compassion;
- Eager to fully embrace and champion the unique culture and spirit of Oldfields.

INFORMATION ON THE SEARCH PROCESS

Oldfields School is conducting a dual search to identify both its next permanent Head of School and an Interim Head of School to lead beginning with the 2026–2027 academic year and beyond. This approach ensures the School will have strong, mission-driven leadership in place while allowing adequate time to identify the right long-term leader. Candidates are welcome to apply for either role, or to express interest in being considered for both based on their experience and availability.

The new permanent Head of School is anticipated to assume the position on July 1, 2026. Oldfields School is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools and will follow NAIS Principles of Good Practice regarding Head of School searches. The School has appointed a Search Committee to conduct the process.

Screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the search is completed.

Please direct all inquiries, applications, and nominations in confidence to the Head of School Search Committee at **HOSSearch@oldfieldsschool.org**.

Candidates should submit:

- A letter addressed to the Search Committee explaining their interest in Oldfields School and which role(s) they wish to be considered for;
- A resume demonstrating education, experience, training, and accomplishments;
- An educational philosophy statement and how it aligns with Oldfields' mission and core values;
- How students who learn differently fit into their philosophy;
- How they envision this commitment developing in their role at Oldfields;
- The names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of five professional references.

Finalists will be expected to submit transcripts and credentials. The compensation package will be within the expected norms and includes a Head of School residence. Oldfields School is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and seeks a diverse and broad spectrum of qualified candidates.

Anticipated salary range of \$170,000 to \$185,000, commensurate with experience.