



**DMCS**  
DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



**HEAD OF HIGH SCHOOL**

**DES MOINES CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

**URBANDALE, IA**

## INTRODUCTION

Des Moines Christian School (DMCS) is an independent, non-denominational Christian school serving students from age two through 12th grade. Originally founded in 1948 by a visionary group of leaders from various churches interested in Christian education, the school has grown from 14 students and one teacher to over 1,500 students and over 300 employees. Located on a beautiful 26-acre campus in Urbandale, Iowa, DMCS serves a diverse student body representing a wide range of churches and communities in the surrounding area. The school offers a rigorous, Christ-centered academic program, including dual credit courses, robust fine arts and athletics programs, and intentional spiritual formation and leadership opportunities, preparing students to be lifelong learners, servant-hearted leaders, and passionate apprentices of Christ.

Des Moines Christian School is seeking a Head of High School to provide visionary and operational leadership for grades 9-12. Reporting to the Associate Head of School, the Head of High School oversees academic programs, student life, and faculty development, ensuring that the high school continues to thrive academically, spiritually, and socially while advancing DMCS's mission. The Head of High School will join the DMCS community at an exciting time as the school prepares to open a new High School campus as early as 2027. This will provide the new Head of High School the unique opportunity to lead this transition and shape the future trajectory of Des Moines Christian High School for the next generation.

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Des Moines Christian School's mission is to equip minds and nurture hearts to impact the world for Christ.*

## CORE VALUES

DMCS's values are the guiding principles and fundamental beliefs that create alignment within the school. They define our culture and unite our community as we work toward common goals.

### Community in Christ

Des Moines Christian School is a diverse body of believers that is united by the DMCS Statement of Faith, finding our ultimate unity in Jesus Christ, who makes our community possible. This community is richly treasured by its members, who agree to partner together - families, faculty, and staff - for the noble purpose of equipping minds and nurturing hearts of our students to make an impact on the world for Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:24)

### Growing with Christ

Being deeply rooted in God's Word, we understand that our call to grow in excellence springs out of our biblical worldview. It is our deep desire to grow in depth of fellowship with our Savior, worshiping him in all we do. Therefore, we value robust academics that train the minds of our students, a rich community that fosters social flourishing, innovative professional development that sharpens our faculty and staff, and deep relationships that help to shape who we grow to be. (Colossians 3:23-24; 2 Peter 3:18)

### Loving like Christ

As a community that seeks to honor Christ, we recognize our call to shape who, what, and how our students love, training them to rest in their identity as one loved by God. Then, they will be able to extend His love to each one whom He loves, the whole world, honoring everyone as bearers of the image of God, and fulfilling Jesus' call to "love our neighbor as ourselves." We imitate Christ, who spoke the truth in love, in the knowledge that God's love sets boundaries for the benefit of those whom he loves, and whose humility and self-sacrifice ought to be the natural rhythm of our lives. (Philippians 2:1-8; Ephesians 4:14-15)



## PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

The Portrait of a Graduate reflects Des Moines Christian School's desire for each student to be impacted by the educational experience. God is never done working in us, and graduation is not an end but another beginning.

### Servant-Hearted Leaders

- Love and serve their families, friends, communities, and the world with passion, care, and empathy.
- Give generously of their time and talents within their relationships, churches, and communities.
- Collaborate with others and impact team efforts with creative ideas, actionable suggestions, and hard work.
- Show perseverance, tenacity, and resilience in the face of difficult tasks and adversity.

### Critical Thinkers and Effective Communicators

- Think critically and analytically through a faithful and Biblical perspective.
- Understand and respect all cultures as created in God's image and value differing perspectives.

- Listen first to understand, resulting in the ability to connect with empathy, thoughtfulness, and confidence.
- Articulate and stand firm in their faith and a biblical worldview.

### Accomplished Learners

- Recognize, pursue, and maximize the potential of their God-given gifts and callings.
- Solve problems with confidence, humility, and courage.
- Set goals, meet expectations, and diligently work to prepare for college, career, and beyond.
- Embrace and commit to lifelong learning.

### Passionate Apprentices of Christ

- Demonstrate confidence and security in their identity as a child of God.
- Seek, discern, and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- Embrace that they are saved by grace, demonstrate the ability to learn from mistakes, and give grace to others.
- Live and act in faith with boldness, joy, and authenticity.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

DMCS is a diverse body of believers, representing more than 100 churches in the Des Moines metro area. The DMCS Statement of Faith is based on Biblical truth, with the purpose of unifying our families and staff with one belief statement.

### The Bible

WE BELIEVE the Bible is the only inspired and infallible Word of God. The Bible is the complete and final revelation of God concerning all matters of faith, truth, and practice.

### The Triune God

WE BELIEVE in the triune God, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, as affirmed in the historic Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

### God the Father

WE BELIEVE God the Father is almighty, merciful, infinitely perfect, eternally existing, and sovereign over all. His providence is seen in acts of creation, salvation, and continual care.

### Jesus Christ

WE BELIEVE in the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, who is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, His virgin birth, miracles, sinless sacrificial life and death atoning for our sins, His bodily resurrection, and ascension. He now reigns together with the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit and through His Church. His imminent return will be in power and glory to judge the living and the dead.

### The Holy Spirit

WE BELIEVE that the person of the Holy Spirit is fully God and the active presence of God in the world today. He brings evidence of God's presence and blesses the Church as the giver of new life in Christ. The Holy Spirit cleanses believers from sin, sanctifies them, guides them in Christian living, gives assurance of salvation, teaches them through the illumination of God's Word, empowers Christians for service, and unifies them to one another in Christ.

### Salvation

WE BELIEVE that all people are estranged from God because of sin (by our nature and our individual choice), condemned by our sin nature, under His



wrath, and completely dependent upon the gracious saving work of Jesus Christ for reconciliation with God. Because Jesus Christ is now our representative and substitute, His sinless life, sacrificial death, and resurrection redeem those who turn from their sins and put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. God then justifies Christians and makes them His children and heirs of eternal life.

### The Church

WE BELIEVE that the true Church is made up of all Christians from all time who, through grace alone and by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, are being transformed by the Holy Spirit and are necessarily united together as one body, visibly found in imperfect local congregations with Christ as the Head.

## DMCS

### AT A GLANCE

FOUNDED

**1948**

ENROLLMENT  
K-12

**1526**

**86**

TOTAL  
FACULTY

**32/5**

HIGH SCHOOL  
FACULTY/STAFF

**52%**

TOTAL FACULTY  
WITH ADVANCED  
DEGREES

HIGH SCHOOL  
FACULTY WITH  
ADVANCED  
DEGREES

**66%**

OPERATING  
BUDGET FOR  
2025-26

**\$20M**

HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENT/  
FACULTY RATIO

**15:1**

### DUAL CREDIT COURSES

**28 IN PERSON CLASSES** EQUATING TO  
**65.5 IN CREDITS WITH OVER 30 DUAL  
CREDITS OFFERED ONLINE** THROUGH  
A LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE



## ACADEMICS

Des Moines Christian School offers a comprehensive, Christ-centered academic program from early education through high school that is rooted in its mission to equip minds and nurture hearts to impact the world for Christ. DMCS emphasizes academic excellence and spiritual formation, with faith engagement integrated into all subjects and learning experiences. The school's philosophy of education focuses on the development of the whole child – heart, soul, and mind – guided by a Biblical worldview and a framework that helps students understand God's creation, brokenness, redemption, and restoration.

Across all grade levels, faculty tailor instruction to individual development, promote critical thinking and communication skills, and engage students in real-world opportunities that reflect God's redemptive story. Our student support services are designed to be cohesive as students progress through DMCS elementary, middle school, and high school. Our Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) guides the way we work with students to help them achieve their best. The result of this approach is reflected in DMCS's Portrait of a Graduate, which aspires for students to be servant-hearted leaders, critical thinkers, effective communicators, accomplished learners, and passionate apprentices of Christ.



## High School

Des Moines Christian School believes that students are created on purpose, for a purpose. The high school community is committed to pursuing that purpose as students learn and grow into the people God has called them to be. DMCS's high school academic program is designed to prepare students for success in college, career, and calling by equipping them with confidence in their knowledge, faith, identity, and gifts. The curriculum encourages inquiry and embraces hands-on learning, including opportunities for students to shadow local employers and gain real-world experience. A six-day flex schedule incorporates large and small group sessions, labs, student support services, and individual learning time to build time-management skills similar to those students will encounter in college. To support academic rigor, DMCS offers dual credit courses – allowing students to earn college credits during high school – and to challenge students and enhance college readiness.

Intentional academic planning begins early, with school counselors working with students in eighth grade to map out course plans that align with individual interests, strengths, and post-secondary goals. Throughout high school, students revisit these plans, ensuring they meet graduation requirements and are positioned for their chosen path. Beyond academics, DMCS fosters a supportive community where teachers know students personally and integrate faith and learning, encouraging involvement in co-curricular activities and leadership roles. Advisory groups

consistent mentorship and spiritual growth, while service, mission trips, and community engagement deepen students' understanding of their purpose and impact for Christ. The result is graduates who are servant-hearted leaders, critical thinkers, effective communicators, accomplished learners, and passionate apprentices of Christ.

## FINE ARTS

DMCS's Fine Arts program extends the school's mission to equip minds and nurture hearts to impact the world for Christ into creative and performance spaces where students further develop character and pursue excellence. At the high school level, students are offered a wide range of opportunities – including concert band, jazz band, marching band, vocal music, show choir, Chamber, Choir, theater, and visual arts – providing multiple avenues to explore and develop their artistic talents. Students engage in performances, showcases, and productions that emphasize a Christ-centered approach to creativity and expression, encouraging them to use their gifts for God's glory. The fine arts experience at DMCS is shaped by core values that promote excellence, character, and commitment, helping students build perseverance, leadership, respect, and a teachable spirit through artistic endeavors. Overall, the fine arts program at DMCS supports artistic growth, community engagement, and the development of well-rounded students who can confidently express their faith and creativity.

## ATHLETICS

### Home of the Lions

Des Moines Christian School's athletics program extends the school's mission beyond the classroom to courts, fields, and arenas where student-athletes further develop character, teamwork, and resilience within a Christ-centered, competitive, character-based, and committed environment. DMCS offers opportunities for students to grow in discipline, leadership, respect, and a teachable spirit while representing the school with integrity and excellence in competition. The Lions compete in a variety of interscholastic sports that encourage physical skill development, camaraderie, and perseverance, all grounded in a Biblical worldview that honors God.

## SPIRITUAL LIFE AND STUDENT LIFE

The Spiritual Life program at Des Moines Christian School is foundational to the student experience, emphasizing a Biblical worldview and intentional spiritual formation. Students participate in weekly chapel services with worship, prayer, testimonies, and guest speakers, along with leadership opportunities on worship teams. Bible classes, prayer groups, retreats, and special events such as Spiritual Emphasis Days and Worldview Days provide students with intentional opportunities to reflect, grow, and engage with culturally relevant topics through a Christian lens. Service initiatives,



### SPORTS

DMCS offers the following sports at the high school level:

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Competition Cheer
- Cross Country
- Dance
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

including Project Local and international mission trips, allow students to live out their faith by serving others locally and globally. Our student-led Spiritual Life Programming Team further supports discipleship and student ownership of spiritual initiatives across campus.

Student life at DMCS is enriched through a wide variety of clubs, activities, and leadership opportunities that build community, character, and service. Competitive extracurriculars such as Debate Team and Quiz Bowl challenge students academically, while programs like Student Council, Leadership Academy, National Honor Society, Yearbook, Prom, Senior Trip, Spirit Weeks, and Worship Arts foster school spirit and connection. High school students can further develop servant-hearted leadership through roles including the LEAD Academy, Student Council, Freshmen Mentors, Student Ambassadors, and National Honor Society officers. Together, these programs provide meaningful ways for students to explore interests, cultivate leadership skills, and contribute to the life of the school community beyond the classroom.



## FACULTY AND LEADERSHIP

The faculty and leadership teams at DMCS are deeply committed to the school's mission and core values, creating a collaborative, faith-centered culture where students flourish. DMCS teachers are viewed as lifelong learners whose passion for teaching significantly impacts student achievement; the school invests substantially in professional development, enabling faculty to attend state and national conferences, pursue advanced degrees, and lead peers in research-based instructional strategies. This commitment to continuous growth produces educators who are credible, competent, prepared, and able to nurture both students' hearts and minds.

At the helm of the school's leadership is Head of School Cade Lambert, who has served in that role since 2016 and brings a strong vision for strategic growth, community building, and aligning resources to strengthen spiritual development and academic excellence. Under his leadership, DMCS has seen significant campus improvements, steady growth in student enrollment, and expanded opportunities for families and students, all while fostering a Christ-centered community where faculty and staff collaborate to support student success. The broader leadership team includes heads of elementary, middle, and high school, as well as leaders in academics, student activities,

human resources, finance and operations, and advancement, all working together to ensure that the school's mission is lived out daily across classroom instruction, student support, and community engagement.

Heather Nerem, Head of Academics, was recently promoted to Associate Head of School. Mrs. Nerem joined the DMCS team as Director of Early Education in 2019 with extensive experience in educational leadership. This includes her work as an Instructional Specialist, Special Educational Curriculum Facilitator, Elementary Principal, and Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction. In 2022, she became DMCS's Head of Academics, leading the innovation and alignment of our academic programs from early education through high school. She transformed faculty professional development, instilled deeper learning for students, and strengthened Biblical integration. She deeply understands our community, can honor and carry forward what we have, and is prepared to help lead us into what's next.

## GOVERNANCE AND ACCREDITATION

Des Moines Christian School is governed by the Board of Trustees. The Board offers strategic oversight to ensure the school's mission and values are upheld and that long-term planning and fiscal stewardship position the school for future generations. The Board supports and holds accountable the Head of School while delegating responsibility for daily operations, enrollment, curriculum, faculty and staff oversight, budget, discipline, and partnership with families to the school's leadership team.

DMCS is a member of the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability (CESA). As a member of CESA, DMCS operates within rigorous accountability standards that support mission clarity, academic quality, effective governance, and institutional sustainability. CESA membership situates the school within a community of like-minded Christian schools committed to continuous improvement and excellence in educational programs and spiritual formation.



**Cade Lambert**  
Head of School

**Heather Nerem**  
Associate Head of School

## FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Des Moines Christian School is supported by a strong culture of generosity that advances its mission and strategic priorities. DMCS operates with a \$22M annual budget that fully funds the operating expenses of the school. Our Advancement Team raises \$3M - \$10M annually for Lion Fund and capital projects. Annual support through the Lion Fund enhances academic programs, spiritual life initiatives, fine arts, athletics, and student experiences across all divisions. Recent capital projects include building additions, gymnasium renovation, and land acquisition. The Head of High School will partner with senior leadership in stewarding resources wisely, supporting enrollment and retention efforts, and engaging families in the ongoing investment in the high school program.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Des Moines Christian School is seeking its next Head of High School to begin in July 2026. DMCS's mission is to equip minds and nurture hearts to impact the world for Christ. The Head of High School's dedication to this mission and values is evident through every aspect of leadership internally and externally. This includes faculty and staff, parents, students, and other community partners.

Reporting to the Associate Head of School, the Head of High School provides leadership and direction in administering educational programs and activities. This position promotes the success of all students by supporting and empowering faculty with a shared vision of learning that fosters a school culture of academic excellence and spiritual growth where High School learners flourish.

## Professional Profile

- Committed to the mission of DMCS: Equipping minds and nurturing hearts to impact the world for Christ.
- Models Christ-centered servant leadership that reflects humility, authenticity, pastoral wisdom, and care for others.



- A teacher and learner at heart who loves students of all ages and exudes enthusiasm for shepherding the growth of children.
- Understands and values the development journey of high school students, appreciating the complexity of adolescence while helping young people grow in confidence, character, and purpose.
- Proven ability to work in a leadership role with diverse groups, including faculty, staff, students, administrators, and parents.
- Exercises discernment, discretion, integrity, and confidentiality in the operation and oversight of the school and its programs.
- A skilled communicator with strength in both spoken and written communication.
- Promotes a positive environment that encourages commitment, collaboration, support, and accountability.
- Demonstrated ability to develop strong relationships of mutual support with the constituent communities of the school
- A visible, relational presence who is fully engaged in the daily life of the school, fostering trust, belonging, and a strong sense of community.
- A servant leader who blends humility and care for others, and has the confidence necessary to make difficult decisions and the ability to navigate conflict and secure a resolution.

## Responsibilities

### Mission, Vision, and Instructional Leadership

- Leads, equips, and empowers the faculty and staff to deliver the mission in all curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Cultivates an environment where Christian Professional Learning Communities (CPLC) serve as the foundation for collaborative practices to meet the needs of each student.
- Collaborates with the Academic Team and faculty to ensure teaching and learning goals, initiatives, and priorities are aligned with DMCS's Philosophy of Education and Strategic Academic Plan.
- Collaborates with the Academic Team in designing or leading meaningful professional development activities designed to improve and/or enhance instructional strategies.
- Uses student assessment data to gather information about student learning, align resources, and prioritize department goals.
- Supports faculty in their professional growth through clear expectations, ongoing conversations, authentic feedback, evaluation, accountability, and professional development opportunities.

### Culture and Community Leadership

- Models Christ-centered leadership and promotes a culture of spiritual growth for faculty, staff, and students.
- Builds trusting relationships with all constituents to create a learning community with a positive school culture that leads to increased student success.
- Supports the success of all students through an active partnership with parents.
- Approaches discipline through discipleship using clear and consistent communication of expectations, appropriate consequences, and restorative practices with students, staff, and families.
- Partners with the Admissions Committee in the process of student admissions and enrollment, including meeting with prospective families seeking admission to the school and clearly articulating the mission, values, culture, and expectations of the High School.



- Develops a robust onboarding experience for new students through parent and student communication, events, and the student ambassador program.
- Generates a strong sense of community through active involvement in the daily life of the High School as well as school-wide events.

### Administrative Leadership

- Works collaboratively with the Leadership Team concerning the needs of High School, including the strategic planning of DMCS.
- Collaborates with the Academic Team to ensure continuity of programs from Early Education through High School.
- Collaborates with the Head of Elementary School and Head of Middle School to support students as they transition from Elementary to Middle School and Middle School to High School.
- Develops the master schedule, and determines faculty teaching assignments.
- Coordinates with Human Resources in employee recruitment and interviewing and makes hiring recommendations.
- Maintains the department budget and partners with the Head of Finance and Operations to develop the annual budget.
- Engages in professional development opportunities.
- Understands, values, and supports the role of philanthropy and community partnerships in advancing the school's mission.
- All other duties as assigned.

## Primary Qualifications

- M.A. or M.S. required or in pursuit of receiving. Holds Iowa administrative licensure or in pursuit of obtaining.
- Leadership experience in school administration, preferably in a Christian school.
- Professing believer in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and committed to growing in a relationship with Him.
- In agreement with the [Des Moines Christian School Statement of Faith](#).
- In agreement with the [Des Moines Christian School Biblical Convictions for Christian Education](#).
- Regularly attends and is actively involved in a church that affirms historic Christian orthodoxy (doctrine, faith, teaching, practice), consistent with the DMCS Statement of Faith, through that church's public creed, confession, core beliefs, or statement of faith.

## THE CHARGE

Des Moines Christian School stands at a pivotal and exciting moment in its history. In 2024, the School was able to purchase 104 acres of land just over a mile from our current campus. A comprehensive master site plan for a high school campus has been completed, and DMCS is in the quiet phase of a campaign to fund the first classroom building and relocate approximately 500 high school students as early as the 2027-28 school year. The next Head of High School will play a critical role in leading this transition. This is more than a facilities move—it is an opportunity to steward culture, expand academic programming, deepen spiritual formation, and unify the high school community. The Head of High School will provide steady, Christ-centered leadership to ensure the new campus sustains DMCS's mission of equipping minds and nurturing hearts to impact the world for Christ.

### Leading the 2027 Campus Transition

- Guide faculty, students, and parents through a clear, mission-aligned transition to the new campus. The new campus will be uniquely high school while remaining unified with our middle school, elementary, and early education programs.



- Align academic programming, student life, staffing, and operations with the opportunities of the new facility.
- Leverage the move to strengthen identity, community, and long-term vision for the High School.

### Advancing Academic & Spiritual Excellence

- Lead and develop faculty to deliver rigorous, mission-driven instruction aligned with DMCS's Philosophy of Education and Strategic Academic Plan.
- Foster collaborative professional learning communities and use student data to inform growth and innovation.
- Model Christ-centered servant leadership and cultivate meaningful spiritual formation and student leadership opportunities.

### Strengthening Culture, Community & Operations

- Build trust and partnership with students, parents, and faculty during a season of change.
- Maintain strong operational leadership in scheduling, staffing, budgeting, and program continuity.
- Ensure the High School flourishes as a vibrant, unified, and mission-driven community in its new home.

This is a defining season. The next Head of High School will help shape not only a building transition, but the future trajectory of Des Moines Christian High School for the next generation.

## ABOUT DES MOINES, IA

### Where Midwestern Heart Meets Big-City Ambition

Nestled at the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, Iowa's capital city surprises and delights at every turn. Des Moines blends a thriving arts and food scene, outdoor spaces designed for real everyday adventure, and genuine community warmth — all at a pace and price point that bigger cities can only envy.

### A Food & Drink Scene Worth Talking About

- Iowa classics like breaded pork tenderloin and Steak de Burgo
- James Beard-nominated restaurants including Harbinger and Clyde's Fine Diner
- Diverse global flavors and beloved neighborhood gems



### Outdoors, Parks & Trails Built for Everyone

- Water Works Park: 1,500 acres of trails, concerts, and riverfront recreation
- Gray's Lake, Easter Lake, and the Des Moines River trail system for kayaking, cycling, and skyline views
- Lauridsen Skatepark: one of the largest in the U.S. at 88,000 square feet

### Rich Arts & Culture

- Pappajohn Sculpture Park featuring world-class outdoor art
- Des Moines Art Center — free and open to the public
- Performing arts ranging from Broadway tours to a century-old Victorian theater

Whether you're here for a weekend getaway or sizing up your next home, Des Moines delivers authenticity, affordability, and ambition in equal measure.

## Places to visit in Des Moines



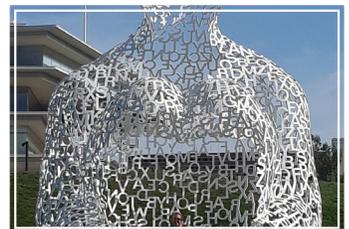
**CAPITOL BUILDING**



**DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET**



**BOTANICAL GARDEN**



**PAPPAJOHN SCULPTURE PARK**

## SEARCH PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The Des Moines Christian School search is underway to appoint a Head of High School who will begin in July, 2026. DMCS has appointed an internal Search Committee and has engaged NextEd to provide support. Compensation will be competitive with comparable private schools in the area.

All candidates will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and discretion. Interested candidates should apply online through [NextEd's website](#). The online application will include specific personal information and the following required uploaded documents:

- Interest cover letter
- Resume
- Statement of personal Christian faith

Candidates who are invited to continue in the process as semifinalists will have a second round of data collection to include at least five references and other information deemed important to the search. Semifinalists will also participate in a recorded video interview with NextEd consultants.

NextEd will continue the recruitment process until a candidate has been selected by the Search Committee, but given this highly desirable opportunity, we anticipate the following timeline:



## COMMUNICATION

Please direct all inquiries to:

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[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)