



**THE FESSENDEN SCHOOL**  
West Newton, Massachusetts

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**ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Start Date: July 2022

[fessenden.org](http://fessenden.org)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES



# THE FESSENDEN SCHOOL

## MISSION

*The Fessenden School cultivates each boy's talents and develops in balance his character, mind, and body in an inclusive and joyful community.*

## CORE VALUES

*Honesty, Compassion, and Respect.*

## OVERVIEW

The Fessenden School is an independent boys' boarding and day school for Pre-Kindergarten through grade 9 in West Newton, Massachusetts. For more than 100 years, The Fessenden School has offered a robust curriculum and programs specifically designed to meet the educational needs of boys.

Thanks to a strong leadership team led by Head of School, Steve Armstrong, as well as a dedicated and talented Board of Trustees, the school is thriving. Enrollment remains strong, Fessenden has ambitious plans for the future, and the School has experienced increased applications in recent years. Consequently, the School has invested heavily in building out the campus, including an expansive new science center. Fessenden is a wonderfully complex school, combining both boarding and day students, also offering vibrant auxiliary programs.

Fessenden seeks a dynamic and collaborative leader as its next Assistant Head of School to focus on the day-to-day operations and closely oversee each of the School's three divisions and the residential program leadership.

## SCHOOL HISTORY

The Fessenden School was founded in 1903 by Frederick and Emma Hart Fessenden as a pre-preparatory "feeder" school for Phillips Exeter Academy (New Hampshire). The School's approach was an early version of "whole child education" that proved extremely successful. In short order, Fessenden added dormitories, classrooms, and playing fields to accommodate the growing numbers of students. Frederick Fessenden and then his son, Hart, would run the school for the first 64 years.

## At a Glance

Founded: 1903

Total students: 516 (89 Boarders)

Students of color: 25%

(including international population)

Average class size: 12

Total faculty: 90, total of 230 employees

Average faculty tenure: 15 years

Operating budget: \$28M

Financial aid budget: \$3.9M

Endowment: \$70M



Fessenden has successfully blended valued traditions with innovative programs and creative initiatives that set the School apart from its competitors. Graduates include some well-known political and business leaders, philanthropists, and other professionals.

## THE SCHOOL

Serving a diverse group of 516 boys from 7 countries, 9 U.S. states, and a number of Massachusetts communities, Fessenden is one of the top junior boarding and day schools in the nation. Boarding students comprise 20% of the entire school; 40% of Upper School students are boarders. Its approach to supporting boys' development in Pre-K through Grade 9 encompasses a thoughtful mix of academics, the arts, physical education, and character education. Here, boys achieve, grow, and develop in character, mind, and body because they're fully seen, supported, and encouraged. Boys at Fessenden are happy, engaged, and inspired.

Overall, Fessenden's innovative curriculum aims to both prepare students for top secondary schools and inspire enthusiastic, creative, lifelong learners. Its program helps students develop the academic and life skills, character traits, knowledge, and habits that will support their success in school and life. In pursuit of its mission, Fessenden also aims to instill the Core Values of honesty, compassion, and respect as a foundation for boys' growth into young men. An added focus on wellness and service to others rounds out this impressive program.

The boarding program serves students in the Middle and Upper schools. Forty staff and faculty families make their homes on campus and support students in all aspects of their lives. Fessenden's 9th-grade year provides its students with the opportunity to build leadership skills and further develop their athletic and academic skills in preparation for entrance into top secondary schools.



## ACADEMICS

Fessenden has created an academic experience that both nurtures and encourages boys to venture beyond their comfort zones. As a result, boys strive, interact, and claim their identities with both confidence and humility. In the Lower School, Pre-K - Grade 4, Fessenden teachers lay a strong academic foundation and promote a love of learning designed to last a lifetime. The faculty focus on cultivating passionate readers and writers, fostering analytical thinking and problem solving, and nurturing creativity. The core Lower School curriculum focuses on language arts, mathematics, and social studies. Additional programming focuses on art, music, science, Spanish, library, physical education, and technology. Students are steeped in the “six Cs:” critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, character, and cross-cultural competency.

The Middle School’s (grades 5-6) and Upper School’s (grades 7-9) approaches to education involve nurturing and supporting boys in and out of the classroom. Intellectually, students are encouraged to take risks and explore their passions through student-led projects, collaborative work, and a wide variety of electives. Core courses include English, math, history, science, and foreign language. The list of electives encompasses nearly 20 visual and performing arts and technology classes. This breadth of offerings gives boys the opportunity to develop new passions and build upon existing talents. Students are offered a great deal of encouragement through the academic support program and the advisory system.

In the School’s Ciongoli Center for Innovation, students at all grade levels engage in STEM projects, cross-divisional collaboration, and the “Innovation Station” Extended Day Program — focused on programming, robotics, engineering, multimedia, and design.

As a result of this comprehensive, 21st-century approach, boys thrive at top secondary schools and successfully navigate the world beyond.



## COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Fessenden's stated core values—Honesty, Compassion, and Respect—are the foundation of their inclusive educational approach. A uniquely diverse community, which spans the globe, brings together students from a multitude of cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and family experiences. The School's effort to create a diverse and inclusive environment has its roots in the educational mission of Fessenden, and also supports its belief in the advancement of social justice and equity in our world.

*"At Fessenden, inclusion means building a community whose spirit and purpose is based on mutual respect and care. It is vital that each member feels recognized and valued. Inclusion is an essential part of our mission to cultivate each student's potential and develop each boy's mind, character, and heart. We believe that differences of backgrounds, perspectives and cultures are integral to preparing boys to be successful young men in a global community. Ongoing, mindful practice of inclusion requires both individual and institutional commitment to self-examination and learning. We further our mission to be a joyfully inclusive community by aligning policies, curriculum, and decision-making to support diversity and inclusion. Inclusion is at the heart of how we treat each other in our daily interactions."*

## SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACEMENT

Fessenden graduates attend a variety of independent schools throughout the U.S. In the past four years, the top choices have been Noble and Greenough School (42), Belmont Hill School (33), Phillips Exeter Academy (18), The Rivers School (18), The Roxbury Latin School (17), Phillips Andover Academy (16), St. Sebastian's School (16), Concord Academy (14), St. Mark's School (14), and Milton Academy (14). Other schools include:

Beaver Country Day School  
Belmont Hill School  
Berkshire School  
Brimmer & May School  
Brooks School  
Buckingham, Browne & Nichols School  
Choate Rosemary Hall  
Church Farm School  
Commonwealth School  
Deerfield Academy  
Dublin School  
Governor's Academy  
Groton School  
Hill School  
Hotchkiss School  
IMG Academy  
Kents Hill School  
Lawrence Academy  
Lawrenceville School  
Loomis Chafee School  
Mercersburg Academy  
Middlesex School  
Millbrook School  
Northfield Mount Hermon School  
Peddie School  
Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School  
Roxbury Latin School  
St. Andrew's School, DE  
St. Mark's School  
St. Paul's School  
Suffield Academy  
Tabor Academy  
Taft School  
Westminster School  
Williston Northampton School



## THE ARTS

The arts are an essential element of a Fessenden education. In the Lower School, students take part in collaborative and individual projects that focus primarily on process. As their skills progress, students practice a variety of techniques and styles and learn about different genres and artists. Each Lower School grade takes the stage in a musical theater production. They also begin their instrumental music journeys with visits to the Music Technology Lab for keyboarding skills, and later study the recorder and ukulele. In 4th grade, the program expands to include brass, woodwind, and string ensembles.

In the Middle and Upper schools, a wide range of studio art and digital media courses give students the opportunity to grow their knowledge of a variety of mediums, from drawing and painting to three-dimensional sculpture and ceramics. The performing arts include choral, band, orchestra, a percussion ensemble, a strings ensemble, and a variety of theater arts. In all, Fessenden offers 13 musical groups and seven theatrical productions per year.

## ATHLETICS

Athletics are an integral and required part of the educational experience — with an emphasis on fair and generous sporting behavior, skill building, and collaboration. In the Lower School, students learn individual skills and team play through group activities and games and develop principled sports behaviors through modeling and teaching.

The Middle School offers 16 team and individual sports at the interscholastic, intramural, and recreational levels. Sports include mountain biking, sailing, hockey, soccer, football, basketball, cross-country, and more.

Fessenden's Upper School offers team and individual sports also at the interscholastic, intramural, and recreational levels during each season — with more than 30 teams in total. Upper School athletics include the full range of sports, along with guided weight training and conditioning.



## SCHOOL LIFE

Fessenden puts a great deal of emphasis on extracurricular programming — from community service to the arts and after-school and weekend programming. It also focuses on helping boys become culturally competent and empathetic young adults. Additionally, affinity groups for boys in each division provide opportunities to meet on a regular basis.

In the Lower School, the faculty and staff make a point of celebrating academic milestones, artistic triumphs, physical accomplishments, and social and emotional discoveries — focusing on supporting the emotional and intellectual lives of boys while creating community. This work extends into the Middle and Upper School programs.

The Upper School Club program offers students more than 20 options a year. The diverse offerings allow boys to further pursue academic, athletic, or social interests. The School also encourages students to develop their own ideas for clubs and to seek faculty mentorship.

## CAMPUS

The Fessenden School is located on an impressive, 41-acre campus in West Newton, Massachusetts, a short distance from downtown Boston.

Overall, this is a well-designed, architecturally engaging campus. The academic facilities include state-of-the-art classrooms and art spaces for all levels, including the recently renovated \$12 million Elfers Center for the Arts. The Ciongoli Center for Innovation, 2,400-square-foot STEM center built in 2016, is situated at the physical and ideological heart of campus. Equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters, and an array of tools and materials. And, the School's Science Center underwent a \$5 million renovation and expansion this summer.



The campus includes small student dorms and housing for 40 faculty. Fessenden's sports facilities rival that of top secondary schools. They include a squash center, two turf fields (one with a track), three gyms, a wrestling center, weight room/fitness center, indoor hockey rink, six lighted tennis courts, and two outdoor swimming pools.

## WEST NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Located approximately 10 miles west of downtown Boston and seven miles from Cambridge, West Newton is a thriving family friendly village within Newton, a city-suburb of Boston. With just over 24,000 residents, West Newton is rated among the best places to live in Massachusetts. It offers residents a dense suburban feel with easy access to shops, restaurants, coffee shops, and parks — as well all the benefits of living in the greater Boston area. The West Newton Village is a National Register Historic District.

The broader Newton community includes lots of green spaces, shopping, and walkable neighborhoods. Rather than having a single city center, Newton resembles a patchwork of 13 villages, each with their own attractions, charm, and many boasting small downtown areas of their own. The Newton History Museum at the Jackson Homestead is a local history museum dedicated to the city's early development. Newton is also home to Boston College, the Mount Ida Campus of UMass Amherst, and Lasell University.





## PRIORITIES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

The Fessenden School proudly embraces its history as the first independent, junior boarding school for boys. Today, with its 41-acre state-of-the-art campus, Fessenden is a vibrant learning community committed to excellence in 21st century learning for boys in Pre-K – Grade 9. The next Assistant Head of school will focus on the leadership of the day-to-day operations of the School and closely oversee each of the School's three divisions and the residential program leadership. As a key member of the senior administrative team, the Assistant Head will work collaboratively with the Head of School and serve as a strategic thought partner while supporting all constituencies in the entire day and boarding community with the opportunity to reside on campus in the Assistant Head of School's residence.

Major responsibilities will include:

- Chair administrative teams and major committees that impact school operations
- Partner with the Director of Teaching and Learning, Division Heads, and department chairs and academic program Directors to support all areas of the program
- Collaborate with the Director of Equity and Inclusion to initiate diversity and inclusion initiatives at the faculty and staff level
- Promote faculty professional development, recommending workshops, speakers, programs, and school observations
- Implement the FOLIO program for teacher evaluation and supervise all aspects of teacher development
- Provide leadership for faculty in the utilization of the Ciongoli Center for Innovation and in implementing project-based learning and design thinking
- Oversee the faculty recruitment process and make recommendations to the Head of School regarding the hiring, retention, and assignment of faculty
- Establish comprehensive programs for the orientation of new teachers, for in-service training of all teachers, and ensure that teachers are familiar with and adhere to school policies in all areas of the school operation
- Provide leadership in matters of classroom management, teaching methods, and general school procedures

## DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Successful candidates will:

- Exhibit excellent interpersonal skills and an ability to relate well and work effectively with all constituents of the Fessenden community
- Be an experienced educator with deep knowledge of current and innovative curricular trends Pre-K-9 and in boys' education
- Possess a commitment to honoring multiple perspectives in order to maintain an authentic, inclusive community and contribute to the DEIJ initiatives school-wide
- Be highly organized and able to motivate others to achieve
- Be an accessible presence with all constituencies and effectively lead with passion, confidence, and joy
- Display moral character, sound judgment, energy, an exemplary work ethic, and a love for working in schools.
- Possess an eagerness to engage actively and visibly with students and faculty
- Be a motivated, flexible, and collaborative colleague who takes joy in team success
- Genuinely convey enthusiasm for building and maintaining connections and community between and among colleagues, divisions, parents, and students
- Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills

## TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are encouraged to speak with the consultants in confidence. All applicants will be expected to submit (preferably in separate PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé; and
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

### **Burke Zalosh**

Search Consultant

burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com

### **Robert Vitalo**

Search Consultant

robert.vitalo@carneysandoe.com