



**DIRECTOR OF THE LOWER SCHOOL
HACKLEY SCHOOL
Tarrytown, NY**

Overview

Hackley School, a K-12 single-campus independent school in Tarrytown, NY, seeks its next Director of the Lower School for July 1, 2019.

With the recent adoption of an ambitious and compelling strategic plan, [*Redefining Excellence: Learning Beyond Boundaries*](#), the Director of the Lower School position is a unique and exciting opportunity for a talented educational leader to collaborate with others in bringing this vision to life. Hackley's strengths - a unique and positive school culture, its strong values, its talented and committed faculty and staff, and its supportive parent and alumni communities - provide the foundation from which this plan can be implemented. Importantly, many of the ideas within *Redefining Excellence* grow out of the spirit of elementary education: the articulation of curricular competencies, an increased emphasis on experiential education, elevating interdisciplinary connections, and highlighting the creative process.

Hackley School takes great pride in its strong sense of community, a characteristic each student learns about and appreciates, beginning in the Lower School. The small size of the Lower School (around 205 students), its uniquely designed building, the many siblings, children of alumni, and employee children that attend the school, and the Lower



School's programmatic and physical integration into the larger Hackley campus all contribute to its distinct culture and feel as an educational community. And it is in this community context that students engage in the joyful work of developing as learners and friends. Hackley's excellent academic, socioemotional, and character education creates a foundation that lasts a lifetime.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

Mission and Portrait of a Graduate

Hackley is a mission-driven institution that actively seeks to apply and measure itself against this standard:

Hackley challenges students to grow in character, scholarship, and accomplishment, to offer unreserved effort, and to learn from the varying perspectives and backgrounds in our community and the world.

In 2017-2018, the full K-12 faculty engaged in a process to develop the [Portrait of a Graduate](#) to align with the mission and serve as an aspirational statement in the development of its next strategic plan.

The School

Established in 1899 as a college preparatory boarding school for boys with strong ties to the Unitarian Church, Hackley has grown and evolved throughout its history. The school's founder and initial benefactor, Mrs. Frances Hackley, partnered with leading area Unitarians to provide a nonsectarian school that embodied and embraced intellectual questioning and inclusiveness. Students of all religions, economic backgrounds, and national origins were welcomed, fully espousing the school's official motto, "United, We Help One Another." These roots and values are found in the Hackley of today, perhaps best embodied in the phrase "Enter Here to Be and Find a Friend," which is carved over a door on the Main Building.

Hackley's three schools make up its total enrollment of approximately 840 students coming from 94 different cities and towns in the tri-state area, with students of color comprising 36% of the student population. For the 2018-2019 academic year, 140 students received over \$5 million in financial aid grants.



In the Lower School, curriculum supports scaffolded, individual learning with an emphasis on developing foundational skills and promoting student curiosity in a joyful learning environment. Students in grades K-4 participate in a collaborative learning environment that prepares them for future academic work, including course of study in computer science, literacy, Spanish, visual arts, performing arts,

and physical education. Singapore Math is used as the basis for the math curriculum throughout the Lower School, bridging into Middle School.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

The hand-off of students from Lower to Middle School provides students an opportunity to grow in independence, as the focus shifts to include emphasis on the academic, organizational, and interpersonal skills students will need as they progress throughout their educational career and beyond. Through a variety of field trips, extracurricular programs, team sports, and community service opportunities, students are equipped with the tools they need to succeed as they matriculate to the Upper School. The Upper School combines both structure and flexibility for its students, offering high-level coursework alongside opportunities for personal growth. Students are encouraged to hone their skills of writing analytically and persuasively, and have the chance to participate in debates, research, and collaborative work.



Hackley's expansive 285-acre campus includes the Kathleen Allen Lower School, the Bridges Theater, the newly opened 115,000-square foot Walter C. Johnson Center for Health and Wellness, numerous athletic spaces, and the Hackley Forest, with its 6.5 miles of hiking and running trails, a field biology research area, a 1-acre deer exclusion zone, and a wetlands facility. The school has evolved from a 7-day boarding program for boys to a co-educational school with a 5-day boarding program in the Upper School. Faculty also live on or near the campus, contributing to the vibrant strength of the Hackley community. Along with their typical duties as teachers, coaches, and extracurricular advisors, some serve in the boarding program.

The Lower School



The Director will oversee a division of approximately 205 students in grades K-4 and the 36 full-time faculty and staff members that support them and create a warm, supportive learning environment.

Hackley's Lower School has a strong academic reputation and deservedly so. Beginning in kindergarten, there is a focus on literacy and reading skills using a balanced literacy framework. Responsive Classroom methodology is integral to the program, as well as the ethos of the Lower School. The major entry points are grades kindergarten and Grade 2, requiring significant collaboration with the Admission Office.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

In grades K-3, two faculty members are present in each classroom, largely supported by a robust and competitive 4-year Assistant Teacher Program that helps to train the next generation of elementary school educators. In Grade 4, one assistant teacher supports all three sections. Additionally, the Lower School is staffed by an administrative assistant, a full-time psychologist, a literacy specialist, a mathematics specialist, a visual arts teacher (Grades 1-4), two music teachers, a science teacher (Grades 1-4), and three physical education teachers.

Grades K-4 are housed in the Kathleen Allen Lower School Building, a standalone facility set amidst the Middle and Upper School facilities. The building, which opened in 2007, was carefully designed with the school's youngest learners in mind, and it contains a dining room, all-purpose room, the Santomero Library, and a computer lab. Additionally, the building wraps around its own playground and basketball court, just steps from the Lower School Garden, all of which emphasize the importance of play.

Opportunities and Challenges

Lead Implementation of Redefining Excellence in the Lower School

The next Director has an opportunity to develop and implement curriculum and programming that support the goals of *Redefining Excellence*. The plan's endorsement of the value of experiential education relates naturally to elementary education, providing significant opportunities for input and leadership. There are many ways for the Middle and Upper School Divisions to learn from and collaborate with the Lower School and vice versa. Lower School faculty are eager to engage in this work.

Strengthen a Culture of Faculty Growth and Development

The Director has an opportunity to shape and strengthen the professional culture of the Lower School, while finding additional and individualized ways for all faculty to grow throughout the arc of a career. This continuous work intersects with the Assistant Teacher Program, a signature effort in the Lower School to train early career educators. By further developing professional mentoring and collaborative opportunities between lead and assistant teachers, the program will grow in strength to best serve Hackley students and contribute to the greater community of educators.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

Ensure Alignment with K-12 Curricular Competencies

Faculty K through 12 have recently contributed to the development of defined curricular competencies. The Director will have the opportunity to review and reflect on the K-4 curriculum, identify opportunities for development that will support the competencies, and ensure its vertical and horizontal alignment. Integral to this work will be leading the Lower School as it addresses ongoing conversations regarding the balance between teacher autonomy and grade-level consistency as related to homework, curriculum, and assessments. Additionally, the Director will play an important role in leading the Lower School's engagement with a series of school wide issues, including diversity, equity, and inclusion; technology, "making" and creative expression; service-learning; and student health and wellness.

Cultivating an Inclusive Lower School Community

Hackley's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion stems directly from its mission, which challenges students "to learn from the varying perspectives and backgrounds in our community and the world." The Director of the Lower School, as with other members of the Leadership Team, is empowered to bring this aspect of the mission to life, ensuring that the school's efforts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are carried forward. Within the Lower School community, there is an opportunity for continued professional development for faculty and additional parent education and conversation regarding a developmentally appropriate approach to these issues.

Partner with Parents in the Education of Their Children

Parents are increasingly turning to schools for advice, insights, and education as related to the healthy growth and development of their children, work that transcends academic growth. The Director has an opportunity to collaborate with the Directors of the Middle School and Upper School to develop programming that supports these conversations.



Further, the Director of the Lower School has an opportunity to establish relationships with parents that welcome questions and feedback in line with the school's articulated expectations for the parent-school partnership. With warmth, empathy, and good humor, the Director can build on Hackley's positive culture and be a resource for parents as they manage the development of their elementary age children.

Contribute to the Strategic Leadership of Hackley

The Director of the Lower School reports directly to the Head of School and is a member of Hackley's Leadership Team. As the expert in elementary education, the Director can



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

offer a strong voice and strategic input to the deliberations of the Head of School and the Leadership Team. Significant opportunities for collaboration exist within the Leadership Team, especially with fellow division directors, the Director of Admission, and the Assistant Head for Academic Affairs.

Characteristics and Qualifications

Hackley seeks an experienced and inspirational leader in its next Director of the Lower School. The successful candidate will:

- Demonstrate a genuine warmth and affection for students and elementary education
- Be highly collaborative, both with colleagues and parents
- Lead with energy, empathy, and joy
- Possess a demonstrated record of faculty and curricular leadership, bringing best practices in elementary education to a K-12 setting
- Demonstrate cultural competence and a commitment to ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
- Develop, implement, and express a compelling vision for Hackley's Lower School
- Represent the Lower School as its public face and chief spokesperson, celebrating its people, values, and Hackley's school culture
- Have earned a graduate degree in a related field.

Specific Responsibilities

The Director of Lower School reports directly to the Head of School and supervises the following positions: Lead teachers K-4, Assistant teachers K-4, Literacy Coordinator, and Lower School Office Administrative Assistant.

In addition, the Director and relevant department chairs jointly supervise the following positions: Art teacher (1-4), Lower School Librarian (K-4), Math Coordinator (K-4), Music teachers (K-4), Science teacher (1-4), Spanish teacher (3-4), Physical Education teachers (K-4), and Technology teacher (K-4) and Lower School psychologist.

Selected specific responsibilities include the following:

- Maintain congruency between the Lower School and Hackley's mission and values
- Serve as the educational leader of the Lower School, fully responsible for the day-to-day operations
- Develop a vision for Hackley's Lower School that aligns with efforts elsewhere and that affirms the school's single-campus K-12 structure



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

- Function as the chief spokesperson for the Lower School, its programs, expectations, behavioral guidelines, and other information
- Set the tone for adult-student and adult-adult relationships through modeling positive daily interactions and the mediation of any conflicts
- Provide leadership related to the refinement, continued development, and alignment of curriculum and assessments
- Partner with the Admissions Office in the recruitment, selection, and yielding of mission-appropriate students
- Lead Lower School faculty meetings that promote professional growth, create transparency and build community, and advance operational and strategic goals
- Engage parents as partners through regular communication, programming, coffees, orientations, and meetings
- Recruit, hire, and evaluate Lower School faculty, including assistant teachers and specials teachers
- Participate in Assistant Head/Division Director meetings and Leadership Team meetings to report on matters relating to the Lower School, as well as the entire school
- Partner with the Director of Auxiliary Programs to ensure the smooth implementation of the Extended Day and Clubs programs
- Engage with and assist with Board of Trustees matters as needed, including writing board reports and attending board meetings

The Area

Ranked as one of Forbes' "Prettiest Towns in America," the village of Tarrytown is located on the eastern bank of the Hudson River, just 25 miles north of midtown Manhattan. Tarrytown provides easy access to major interstate highways, as well as the MTA's Metro-North Hudson Line. The town itself is enjoying a revitalization that has made it a popular locale for food and arts, all set amidst a scenic location and diverse town population. Residents and visitors alike enjoy Tarrytown's rich history, which includes being a throughway on the Underground Railroad.

School Leadership

Michael C. Wirtz became Hackley School's 12th Head of School on July 1, 2016. Prior to joining Hackley, Mr. Wirtz served as the Assistant Head of School/Dean of Faculty for six years at St. Mark's School in Southborough, MA. Before his time at St. Mark's, he taught for nine years at Concord Academy in Concord, MA, where he also served as Science Department Chair, a coach, and a house parent. Mr. Wirtz holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, Summa Cum Laude from Ohio University, and he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, Lambda of Ohio. He received his Ed.M. in Policy, Planning, and Administration at Boston University.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

The Leadership Team is comprised of the Associate Head for School Operations, the Assistant Head for Academic Affairs, three division directors, the Director of Advancement, the Director of Communications, the Director of Admissions, and the Director of Finance and Campus Planning.



To Apply

Interested candidates should send resume/CV, letter of intent, list of five references with contact information (references will not be contacted until the candidate is notified), and statement of philosophy of education and leadership to John Faubert, jfaubert@carneysandoe.com, or Sloane Meyer, sloane.meyer@carneysandoe.com

Please do not contact the school directly.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com