



HOLTON-ARMS SCHOOL

Bethesda, Maryland

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Start Date: July 2022

holton-arms.edu



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES



Mission

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit.”

OVERVIEW

Founded more than a century ago, Holton-Arms School encourages young women in grades 3-12 to approach the world with a thirst for challenge, unflinching curiosity, and a sense of responsibility to use what they learn for the greatest good. Holton is a vibrant place where students are deeply engaged in the process of learning. Since they are both challenged and nurtured, they develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of competence. The School offers rigorous and dynamic programs in the traditional academic areas, the fine and performing arts, and athletics. Students hail from Maryland, Virginia, and D.C.

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit.” Founded in 1901 by two visionary women, Holton-Arms continues to cultivate a diverse, inclusive, and equitable school community, to tend to the health and wellbeing of its members, and to build a global curriculum that responds to the learners in its classrooms and the world around us. In this vibrant community committed to academic excellence, students are scholars, artists, and athletes who find their voices, take risks, learn from mistakes, pursue opportunities for leadership, and build lifelong friendships.

Holton-Arms is not just a place focused on academic performance. It also emphasizes the values of respect, compassion, and service to others so that its students can participate effectively in school life, as well as in local, national, and global communities. In doing so, the School seeks to develop in its students’ personal integrity and a sense of responsibility that will help its young women to make wise and ethical choices. The School lives out its mission through the *Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well* (LW3) framework, a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to supporting each student and ensuring that all students thrive in school and in life, growing into leaders who will make the world a better place.

Mission

Founded: 1901

Total Students: 670

Middle School Students (grades 7 and 8): 152

Students of Color: 41%

Total Full and Part-time Faculty: 120

Middle School Full and Part-time Faculty: 26

Faculty of Color: 25%

Faculty/Student Ratio: 6:1

Faculty with Advanced Degrees: 81%

Financial Aid Awarded: ~\$5.3M

Students Receiving Aid: 24%

Endowment Value: \$52.6M

Motto: *Inveniam viam aut faciam*

(I will find a way or make one)



Holton-Arms seeks a new Middle School Director to begin the role in July 2022. Middle School is a meaningful time of transition that is rich with opportunity and purpose. Strong candidates will be advocates for girls' education and will delight in working with Middle School students. The next Middle School Director will be equipped to build genuine connections with students, families, and colleagues to ensure all parties are working in harmony to prepare Holton-Arms women to be agents of change and citizens of the world as they strive to “learn well, live well, and lead well.”

SCHOOL HISTORY

In 1901, 19 years before women had the right to vote, Jessie Moon Holton and Carolyn Hough Arms founded the Holton-Arms School. The high academic standards for which Holton-Arms School is known today were set during the School's early years. Small classes were maintained to afford a maximum amount of individual attention to each student, and only the most qualified teachers were invited to join a faculty dedicated to the education of youth—“not just to the education of the mind but of the soul and spirit.” Mrs. Holton's dream was to create an “Open Door” where her students would be inspired to explore new ideas and develop their full potential. She also insisted that they give back to the community.



In 1963, the School moved to the River Road campus in Bethesda, Maryland. The expanded facilities allowed for increased enrollment, and new courses were developed to augment a strong traditional curriculum. In the following years, major additions included the Alice S. Marriott Library, a photography lab, an art studio, an art gallery, an infirmary, and the Advancement Center. Once again, with new facilities came new programs: the Creative Summer Day Camp and LEEAP, an after-school program offering art, music, dance, and drama classes. The student activities center, housing expanded dance facilities, a double gymnasium, pool, theater, rehearsal rooms for chorus and orchestra, and several classrooms, was completed in 1989.

Holton celebrated its Centennial in 2001. The Centennial Building Project—providing students with a new science wing, expanded performing arts rehearsal and performance facilities, renovated academic spaces, and a new all-weather track and field—was completed in 2003-2004. Renovated in the summer of 2012, the main entrance and administrative building welcome students, faculty, alumnae, and parents to the School. Along with bright natural light and soaring ceilings, the space features thoughtful architectural details that reflect the more-than-100-year history of the School. As visitors enter, they cross over Holton’s timeless School seal and beneath the cherished motto, *Inveniam viam aut faciam*—“I will find a way or make one.”



THE SCHOOL

For well over a century, Holton-Arms has maintained high academic standards while producing graduates who are also exceptionally conscientious, curious, and collaborative. It is a place where parents support the School by helping out in the library, on field trips, on committees of the Board, and at special functions. And it is and a place where outstanding faculty continue to give maximum attention to students individually.

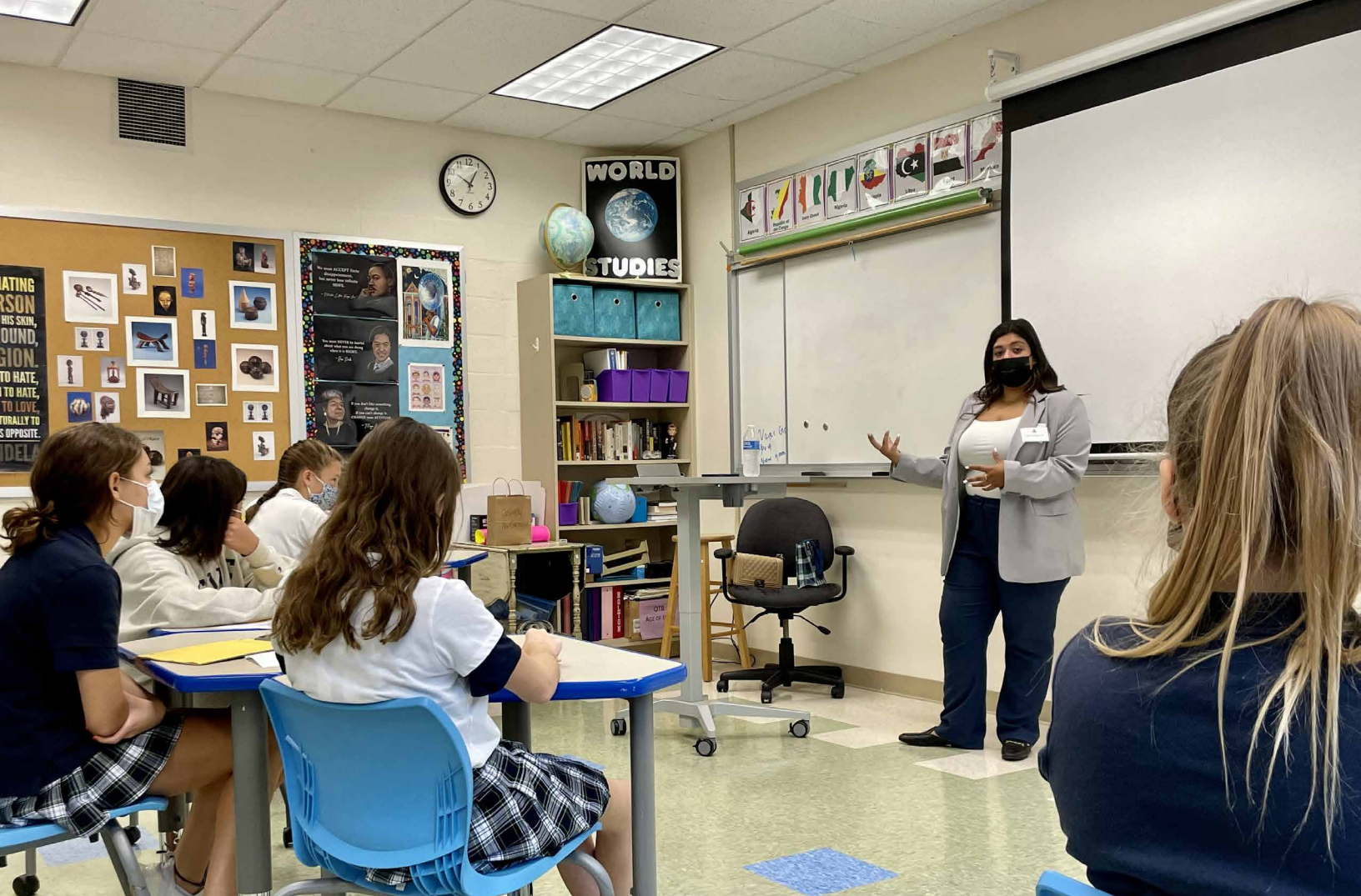
Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well is Holton-Arms' philosophical approach to educating the mind, the soul, and the spirit. This approach is intended to be comprehensive and multi-dimensional so that every student can be seen for who they are and valued for what they bring to the community. Accordingly, the approach embraces excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics in concert with health and wellbeing; global competencies; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, ensuring that Holton-Arms students reach their full potentials and receive the preparation they need to become leaders who will change the world for the better.

Across the board, Holton is a forward-thinking place that simultaneously honors tradition. It nurtures a love of lifelong learning, tenacity of purpose, and intellectual curiosity. The Holton graduate exemplifies strength of character and exercises moral courage; they value diversity of identity and thought and believe that trust, respect, and empathy are the keys to building relationships.



Holton-Arms believes that single-gender education is not merely a matter of separating girls and boys. As a girls' school, Holton-Arms commits—through curriculum and culture—to ensuring girls take center stage, while drawing upon what is known about the way they grow and learn. By doing this in the classroom, as well as in the community, the culture, and the climate, a Holton-Arms education is a powerful and transformative experience.

The School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Association of Independent Maryland Schools, and the State of Maryland. Holton holds memberships with the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington, the Association of Independent Maryland Schools, the Parents Council of Washington, the National Coalition of Girls Schools, The Heads Network, the Association for Middle Level Education, Council on Spiritual and Ethical Education, INDEX, EAB, and One Schoolhouse, of which Holton was a founding member.



MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMICS

Programmatically, Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well (LW3) is the framework for building Holton's curriculum. It allows teachers to stretch the work they do with students beyond traditional academics and is rooted in the institutional priorities of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; health and wellbeing; and global education. Gifted and devoted Middle School teachers create safe spaces for students to challenge themselves, explore new interests, and reach beyond their comfort zones. The faculty regularly reviews and revises the curriculum to keep coursework current with developing trends and technologies. [School-wide competencies](#), rooted in the LW3 framework, are woven into all courses, programs, and assessments at the School.

Preparing Holton girls for fluency in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is paramount. Middle School courses are designed to ensure girls are fully equipped to innovate, advocate, and harness the power of STEM fields for the good of the world. Middle School marks one chapter in a 10-year sequence of project-based encounters with STEM disciplines, that spans from a Design Technology program in Lower School to engineering in Upper School. Throughout, students are supported by state-of-the-art technology and facilities as they develop skills of data collection, research, analysis, design, and fabrication.



At the same time, the Middle School curriculum places an emphasis on developing superlative writing skills. Students strengthen their analytical ability, reading comprehension and logical progression of ideas. Writing activities include expository and creative options. In order to draw meaningful connections with the literature and their lives, students also explore creative expression and finding their own voice.

While establishing a superb grounding in core and specialized subjects, the Middle School program embraces and honors the complexity of adolescence through an intentional and proactive approach to social and emotional wellness. Small Advisory groups provide safe spaces for students to interact with a caring adult on a regular basis. Seminar, an integrated, interdisciplinary, spiraling schoolwide curriculum, helps students build a solid and healthy sense of identity by developing skills of self-awareness and empathy. They tackle critical issues including gender, power, identity, bias, and difference, both in their own lives and in global contexts—whether linking classroom learning to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals or traveling with classmates to New Orleans or Belize.

Finally, Middle School students pull together their learning through the eighth grade Capstone and the seventh grade “Design Project,” which focuses on the city of Washington, D.C. Students devote part of a day each week to these interdisciplinary passion projects.

Ultimately, the goal is for students to leave Middle School as confident, creative problem-solvers who know how to iterate and are comfortable with failure—and who are able to do all of this with a global mindset.



THE ARTS

The arts and artists are thriving at Holton-Arms, challenging the mind, nurturing the soul, capturing the imagination, and celebrating the human spirit.

The arts curriculum actively engages each student in the process of discovering their creative vision, while acquiring technical skills and gaining historical and cultural perspectives. Visual art courses in the Middle School provide general introductions to studio art, photography, and ceramics, and reinforce skills and concepts learned in Lower School.

Middle School dance opportunities include Dance Workshop, a one-trimester elective (offered twice per year), and the Middle School Junior Orchestis Dance Company, which develops student choreographers with a strong technical foundation in a variety of dance styles.

In the dramatic arts in Middle School, Holton offers classes in both acting and theater tech as well as several performance opportunities annually, including a production with Landon School. The program focuses on portraying characters broadly and boldly and on working together as a theatrical ensemble. Curricular study in drama occurs during the traditional school day and beyond.

In music, seventh-grade students use the Music Technology Lab as a focus for hands-on exploration of popular song styles and their roots, as well as a place to arrange, create, and improvise. As a continuation of their exploration of instrumental music that begins in Lower School, students in seventh and eighth grades may also join Chorus, Handbell Choir, String Orchestra, or Wind Ensemble.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

All Middle School students are required to participate in Physical Education during the school day. Each season, Middle School students gather to choose one activity from a wide range of competitive (interscholastic team) and non-competitive (individual or fitness-oriented) options.

Middle School athletics focuses on teamwork and sportsmanship, health and safety, responsibility and accountability, and building meaningful relationships. At this level, an effort is made to offer athletes on interscholastic teams equal playing time, and Middle School athletics operate with a no-cuts philosophy. Options include dance, field hockey, soccer, tennis, volleyball, cross country, fitness, basketball, ice hockey, swimming, winter track, winter crew, lacrosse, softball, tennis, and track and field.

SCHOOL LIFE

Holton's community fabric is tightly woven because the School believes learning is at its best in an inclusive and supportive environment where students connect intellectually and emotionally with those around them.

The foundational Middle School Advisory Program seeks to build a community of learners and a culture of connectedness. The goal of the program is to help every student find meaningful relationships with adults within the school and with their peers, feeling valued, seen, and heard by all community members, and increasing engagement in the life of the school. Middle School faculty and staff purposefully develop the culture of connectedness by working with students to develop Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies, conflict resolution skills, and restorative practice competencies that have been proven to increase students' academic success and career readiness.



The Common Threads program, affinity groups for Lower and Middle School students, is another significant way in which Holton-Arms works to ensure every student feels their school is a safe and supportive space. Through Common Threads, students can explore and celebrate the dimensions of their identities to uplift and empower themselves towards action and positive change in the world. L.O.V.E. is at the center of this program and is designed to help students from minoritized communities examine oppressive systems of power and privilege and claim their connection with anti-racist resisters throughout history. L.O.V.E. is an acronym for the pillars of this approach: Looking Inside Oneself; Others and How I Intersect; Valuing Our Experiences; and Executing Positive Actions.

All of this exists and thrives in no small part because, in 2015, Holton designated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as a School-wide priority. Since then, the School has created a senior administrative position devoted to diversity (now the Director of Diversity, Wellbeing & Global Education), created a school-wide faculty and staff committee, TIDE (Towards Inclusion Diversity and Equity); established a Board level Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; rewritten and approved the Diversity Mission Statement; established a Parent Association Vice-President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; created and implemented the Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well Seminar; engaged in extensive professional development for faculty and staff (led by outside consultants as well as in-house leaders); established Lower School and Middle School affinity groups; and organized and implemented student-run annual diversity conferences.



Holton is beloved by its students and alumnae for facilitating a deep sense of school pride through numerous traditions. For example, each student is part of either the Blue Team or the White Team. The connection can go back generations; alumnae daughters are part of the same team as their mothers, likewise for sisters, aunts, and cousins. Over the course of the year, there are opportunities for girls to demonstrate Blue and White spirit to earn points for their team. Spirit week is celebrated early each fall with students always anticipating the Panther Pride Parade, during which each class dresses to fit a class theme, the jazz band plays from a float, and faculty and staff dress up.

No one knows the precise date that the Holton-Arms School first opened its doors, but it was sometime in February 1901. As a result, each February (usually on or near the 14th), the School celebrates another favorite tradition, "Happy Birthday Holton-Arms," with a special lunch and a D.J. in the Dining Room.

Holton provides opportunities for students to interact with boys through its longstanding relationship with Landon School, a nearby school for boys in grades 3-12. In Middle School, this relationship includes a joint annual Middle School theater production, regularly scheduled grade-level "collaborations," and a co-sponsored trip to Belize.



CAMPUS

The School is situated on a beautiful suburban campus of 57 acres of rolling woodlands on River Road. The campus features two academic buildings connected by an administrative building, two libraries, a performing arts center, 400-seat theater, black box theater, natural light art and ceramics studios, photography lab, three dance studios, and multiple music education spaces. The athletics facilities feature a double gymnasium, indoor competition-size pool, seven outdoor tennis courts, two softball fields, a synthetic turf field, a Bermuda grass field, a fitness center, three dance studios, and an all-weather outdoor track.

The School is in the final stages of its Promise Campaign, which will provide funds for a new Learning Commons, including common gathering spaces and a renovated Upper and Middle School library.

BETHESDA, MARYLAND

Bethesda, Maryland, a family-friendly suburb of Washington, D.C., is one of the most highly educated communities in the United States. With an estimated 63,000 residents, it is a vibrant town and a destination for shopping, dining, and artistic and cultural events. The community features major entities like the National Institutes of Health, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and Lockheed Martin defense headquarters and is home to D.C. commuters, long-time residents, and foreign dignitaries, making for a diverse mix of cultures. Its central location means quick access to the nation's capital plus other popular neighborhoods like Georgetown and Silver Spring.



Bethesda is divided into neighborhoods including Downtown Bethesda, Woodmont Triangle, Bethesda West, Wisconsin North, and Wisconsin South, each with its own particular flavor. Wide side streets and large houses feel far away from the stress of Washington, while Bethesda’s downtown has a vibrant mix of entertainment and dining offerings. D.C.’s Metro (lightrail) system makes for easy travel in and out of the city.

Bethesda is a health-conscious community, and there are many businesses that cater to fitness and a healthy lifestyle. The Capital Crescent trail links to Georgetown and Silver Spring and is a popular route for runners and bikers. The trail offers a unique, eye-level view of parts of D.C. and Montgomery County not seen from a vehicle. Another popular spot is the Carderock Recreation Area, a serene 100-acre park that is part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The area is a magnet for nature enthusiasts who love the park’s raw beauty and athletes who enjoy rock climbing, hiking, biking, and boating.

Many flock to nearby D.C. to discover what the halls of the 17 free Smithsonian museums hold, to paddle on the Potomac and Anacostia rivers, or to relish its extraordinary architecture. Over the last several decades, D.C. has experienced a cultural renaissance that has reinvigorated communities like the U Street corridor and H Street with nationally renowned restaurants, innovative gastropubs, and a bounty of international flavors. D.C. has had an influx of locally owned shops, funky marketplaces, and people-watching hot spots, ranging from the Union Marketplace to pockets of bustling commercial activity in myriad communities such as Chinatown Gallery Place and Adams Morgan.

In all, Bethesda is a thriving suburban community that has won accolades from numerous “best of” lists and is the perfect complement to city life in D.C.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Middle School Director will have the opportunity to work with a talented and dynamic student body and faculty and an engaged Middle School leadership team, within a culture that possesses a deep and clear commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; student and faculty health and wellbeing; and global education. The priorities, opportunities, and challenges ahead include:

- Partnering with the Lower School and Upper School Directors to nurture cohesion across grades 3-12 while simultaneously establishing the Middle School as a desitnation in its own right;
- Refining and building upon recently-developed programs including the seventh grade Design Project, eighth grade Capstone, Seminar, Advisory, competency-based assessment, and student-led conferences;
- Embracing and furthering Holton’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as described in the [DEI Mission Statement and Roadmap to Anti-Racist Education](#);
- Designing and implementing systems and structures to ensure effective communication between and among Middle School parents, employees, and students;
- Building and nurturing community among adults, further infusing the culture with a spirit of joy;
- Supporting ongoing work to evaluate and refine curriculum and pedagogy, including furthering opportunities for interdisciplinary experiences, student-centered instruction, and competency-based learning;
- Advancing a model of distributed leadership and supporting the growth of teacher-leaders; and
- Unifying the academic and co-curricular programs, to provide an even more fully integrated student experience.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The most competitive candidates will offer most of the following qualifications and qualities:

- Deep appreciation for Holton’s mission to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit” and a particular affinity for working with Middle School students;
- Personal commitment to and professional experience stimulating diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and the requisite skillfulness to support student and employee growth in this area and to facilitate critical conversations in the design of ever-more inclusive curriculum and programs;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity across a wide range of audiences;
- Creative, communicative, student-centered, and collaborative approach to decision making;
- The ability to navigate complexity, in part through effective prioritization, delegation, and management of systems;
- Teaching experience and appreciation for a student-centered program; and
- Ability to prioritize visibility amidst the demands of a busy professional schedule.



TO APPLY

Interested candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing interest in this particular position; and
- A current résumé.

Selected candidates will also be asked to provide the following:

- Responses to writing prompts specific to this position; and
- A list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each. (References will not be contacted without the candidate's permission.)

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a résumé and cover letter to:

Heather Flewelling

Chief Talent Officer

heather.flewelling@carneysandoe.com

Marsha Little

Search Consultant

marsha.little@carneysandoe.com