

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

VISITATION SCHOOL

Mendota Heights, Minnesota

visitation.net

Start Date: July 2024



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Visitation School provides an excellent education within a Catholic environment permeated by Salesian Spirituality and the living tradition of the Visitation Sisters.

Guiding Principles

Under God's guiding hand, Visitation Sisters, trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, parents and students are committed to the following:

- Gentle, nurturing formation of faith and morality of students in the Salesian community toward reverent worship; responsible, global engagement; the cultivation of loving relationships; and respect for God's creation and for the diversity and dignity of all people.*
- Guidance of the holistic growth of each student from infancy toward adulthood through innovative teaching and learning that honors the educational philosophy of the Sisters and includes intentional fostering of leadership within a coed lower school and all-girls middle and upper schools; a challenging college preparatory program; vibrant and varied co-curricular opportunities; broad exposure to the arts; engaged citizenship; and inspiration to pursue lifelong learning.*
- Robust governance - derived from a long, stable, independent history - characterized by expert and wide consultation, judicious discernment, Church and community collaboration, and sound fiscal policies.*

At a Glance



Established
1873



Enrollment
570



Financial aid awarded
\$2.2M



Student-teacher ratio
17:1



Students of color
21%



Total faculty
60



Faculty with advanced degrees
47%



Campus size
66 acres

Faculty of color: 5.4%

Students receiving aid: 38%

Endowment: \$30M

Annual operating budget: \$16M

Clubs and organizations: 40+

Motto: *Non Scholae, Sed Vitae* (Not for school, but for life)



Overview

One of the finest and most innovative schools in the Midwest, Visitation is an Independent Catholic school founded in 1873 by the Sisters of the Visitation. The school provides an excellent education for its 570 students in a Catholic environment permeated with Salesian Spirituality and the living tradition of the Visitation Sisters. The school educates boys and girls from Montessori Pre-K through grade five, and is all girls in grades six through twelve, providing the only all-girls Middle and High School experience in the state of Minnesota, with all the documented advantages of the single-gender setting.

Programming in academics, athletics, and the arts is stellar; the faculty is first rate; and students are accepted to outstanding colleges and universities throughout the US, including those that are most selective.

Guided by the timeless and profound spirituality of St. Francis de Sales who preached the “Little Virtues,” including kindness, courage, humility, acceptance and Liberty of Spirit, Visitation embraces a philosophy of education that encompasses but also goes well beyond high academic achievement, emphasizing growth and wholeness of mind, body, and spirit, in keeping with its motto: “We learn not for school, but for life.” The school’s cherished Salesian charism touches the hearts and minds of all who teach and learn there, creating an atmosphere of mutual care, warmth, and camaraderie that envelops everyone.

Visitation is situated on a beautiful 66-acre campus in Mendota Heights, MN, a handsome and historic suburb which combines small town charm with easy access to all that the Twin Cities have to offer, with their robust economy, flourishing arts, cultural, and culinary scenes, and professional sports.

The school launched the 2023 school year with a joyous, community-wide celebration of its 150th Anniversary. Now that the first 150 years are triumphantly in the books, Visitation is eager to find a dynamic, relational, and faith-filled new Head with a track record of successful school leadership, to help take this venerable and beloved school to the next level.



Opportunities and Challenges

- To help ensure that the living legacy of the Sisters of The Visitation remains the heart and soul of the school, expand and strengthen the Salesian Center as a resource for studies and worship in Salesian Spirituality at the school and in the larger community;
- Deepen the school's commitment to academic excellence by enhancing the curriculum and supporting the faculty as they pursue innovative, student-centered instructional and curricular practices that keep Visitation at the forefront of educational best practices;
- As Visitation plans to launch a major capital campaign in the next two years, the next Head will be expected to contribute energetic leadership for this exciting and transformative effort, helping to shape campaign strategy, build connections with the donor community, and assist with the securing of support to enhance the endowment and accomplish much-needed capital projects;
- Claim, leverage, and expand the school's expertise in educating young women prepared to lead in a global world, and take greater advantage of Visitation's unique status as the state's only all-girls middle and high school in marketing and admissions efforts;
- Focus on enhancing enrollment by strengthening awareness in the broader community of all that Visitation School has to offer. Along with its distinguished academics and inspiring spirituality, it provides a warm and inclusive environment where students find powerful affirmation and many different pathways to success, fulfilling the teachings of St. Francis de Sales: "Be who you are, and be that well."



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The most qualified candidates will hold a Master's degree in a relevant field, draw on strong executive leadership skills to lead an institution in an ever-changing world, and will be earnestly committed to the school's mission and values.

Specific Qualities and Characteristics for the Head of School include:

- A person of Catholic faith who has a history of leading with Salesian values -- qualities that include honesty, acceptance, generosity, humility, gentle strength, kindness, patience, simplicity, liberty of spirit, interiority, joyful optimism, courage, acceptance and stewardship;
- A leader who is strategic, visionary, and action-based, and who has a proven history of leading and managing faculty, staff, and other professionals in complex organizations;
- Deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with a K12 independent school community, and particularly cognizant of the unique challenges that Catholic schools face today;
- Strong understanding of, and commitment to, the benefits of a single-gender education;
- Exemplary oral and written communication skills, specifically when articulating vision and strategy, as well as towards fundraising efforts;
- A student of leadership, with experience nurturing and developing the confidence to delegate effectively to a strong leadership team;
- Understanding of (or willingness to learn about) the educational landscape of the Twin Cities and the capacity to clearly articulate the legacy of, and vision for, Visitation;
- Proven ability to assemble strong leadership teams and draw a community together in support of institutional goals;
- Capable of attracting, retaining, and growing teachers, academic leaders, coaches and staff in order to sustain and enhance the school's commitment to academic and extracurricular excellence;
- Embrace and cultivate diversity, social justice, and inclusion, particularly as the student body grows;
- A confident leader capable of calmly handling divergent views and demands of parents, donors, and alumnae, and able to communicate clearly and resolutely, staying true to the Salesian values and strategic vision of the school.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Visitation School.

[School Website](#)

[Virtual Campus Tour](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Portrait of a Vis Learner](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

[School Profile](#)

[Visitation Campus](#)

[About Mendota Heights, Minnesota](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
- A current résumé
- A completed Candidate Questionnaire (to be provided by consultants)
- 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:

Bill Christ

Senior Consultant

bill.christ@carneysandoe.com

Jess Roberson

Senior Associate

jess.roberson@carneysandoe.com