

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

FRIENDS SEMINARY

New York, New York

friendsseminary.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Friends Seminary educates students from kindergarten through twelfth grade, adhering to the values of the Religious Society of Friends. We strive to build a diverse school where students exercise their curiosity and imagination as they develop as scholars, artists and athletes. In a community that cultivates the practices of keen observation, unhurried reflection, critical thinking, and coherent expression, we listen for the single voice as we seek unity. The disciplines of silence, study, and service provide the matrix for growth: silence opens us to change; study helps us to know the world; service challenges us to put our values into practice. At Friends Seminary, education is rooted in the Quaker belief in the Inner Light – that of God in every person. Guided by the testimonies of integrity, peace, equality, and simplicity, we prepare students to engage in the world that is and to help bring about a world that ought to be.

At a Glance



Established
1786



Total enrollment
790



Total faculty and staff
179



Student-teacher ratio
8:1



Students of color
41%



Financial aid awarded
\$6.9M



Endowment
\$45M

Lower School enrollment: 259
Middle School enrollment: 227
Upper School enrollment: 304
Students receiving aid: 23%
Annual operating budget: \$57M

Athletic teams: 33
Student-led organizations: 45+
Annual fine arts productions: 9

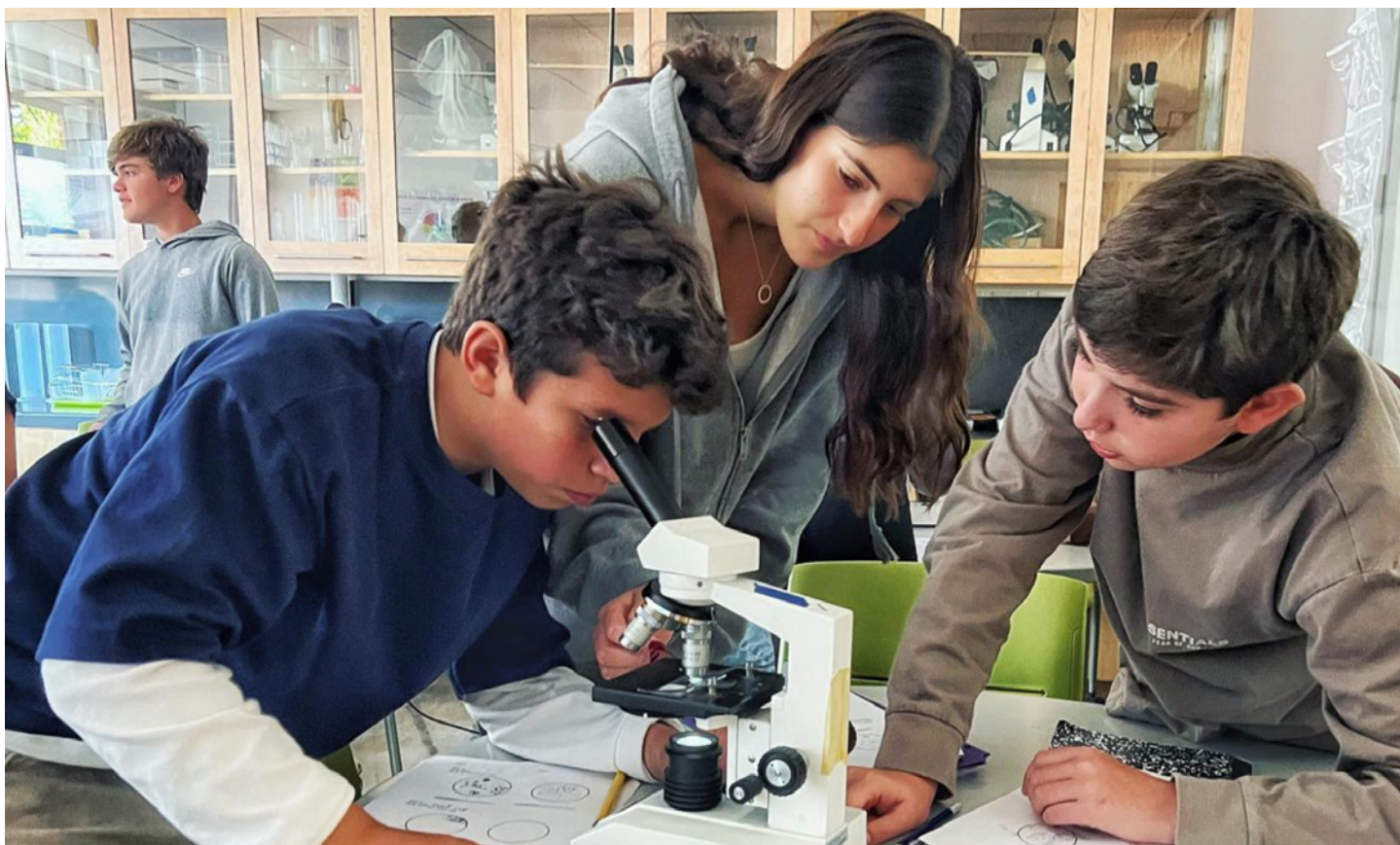


Overview

We are excited to present this leadership opportunity at one of the leading independent schools in New York City. As the oldest continuously operated coeducational school in the city, Friends Seminary has prepared students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 for success in college and beyond since 1786. A Friends School rooted in Quaker values; Friends Seminary emphasizes character development as much as it does college preparation. Inspired by the Quaker testimonies of peace, integrity, equality, and simplicity, faculty forge a curriculum that helps students locate their innate curiosity and exercise their imaginations through a program of study that embraces learning in the classrooms, on the fields and stages, in the community, and throughout the world.

Located in the Gramercy Park neighborhood, the school attracts students from across New York and New Jersey and is valued for how it integrates its program into the life of the city while promoting a global outlook. Institutional commitments to service and respect for others yield a community that is giving and nurturing, that embraces differences and seeks to recognize “that of God” in everyone, seeing past distinctions and identifying the common threads of humanity. When walking the halls of the school one can experience the energy and kindness of the students and the dedication and talent of the faculty. It is clear from conversations with students and parents, the faculty members are appreciated for the deep connections they establish; this is a hallmark of a Friends education.

The next head of school will follow the transformative tenure of Bo Lauder. In his 24 years at Friends, Bo expanded the campus, led program innovations, and raised the profile of Friends Seminary. It is of paramount importance that the next head of school continue to focus efforts on being connected to the school community: students, teachers, parents, alumni and meeting members. The next head of Friends will be an active, accessible presence in the school and embrace and model the Quaker values that so distinguish the school.



Opportunities and Challenges

Building on the highly successful tenure of Bo Lauder, the next head of school will lead Friends Seminary as it moves forward in its third century of operation. The school stands alone in its commitment to Quaker values in the Manhattan market. Members of the community have done a commendable job in highlighting what makes Friends stand apart from other independent schools, and its next leader will be charged with carrying this distinct message forward. This is a school with a long legacy of success that is moving confidently into the future.

In addition to the duties regularly associated with overseeing the daily operations of the school, the next leader will possess the following:

- A desire to maintain and fortify the Quaker identity of the school. This will mean having close connections with current families, faculty and staff, FSTA, alumni, and members of the Quarterly Meeting;
- Extensive knowledge of the K-12 experience and the ability to formulate questions and programs that will keep Friends at the forefront of educational excellence;
- Exhibit an understanding of the pressures that exist in a competitive independent school market and the ability to make the case for Friends to future families;
- Demonstrated commitment to making Friends an inclusive environment where all students have an authentic sense of belonging and faculty and staff voice is recognized;
- Be a strategic thinker excited about promoting what Friends needs to do to address the future needs of its students;
- Enthusiastic ability to cultivate philanthropic relationships to continue to maintain and raise the financial health of the school.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

Friends Seminary School is seeking in its next Head of School an experienced and inspiring educational leader who fully embraces the school's mission, vision, and values. The strongest candidates will offer the following experiences, skill sets, and mindsets:

Professional Qualifications

- A deep understanding of and appreciation for the joys and compelling qualities of a multidivisional school;
- Significant school experience, including work with curriculum and instruction, school operations, strategic planning, and board relations;
- Successful experience recruiting, hiring, supporting, and retaining talented, broadly diverse, and mission-aligned faculty;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to calmly communicate with confidence, clarity, and consistency both orally and in writing;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to execute on the vision as well as manage complex systems and processes.



Leadership Style

- The ability to empower and support faculty, build a cohesive team, and provide opportunities for growth and advancement;
- A commitment to honoring multiple perspectives to maintain an authentic, inclusive community, done in a fashion consistent with Quaker values.;
- An understanding of and respect for the school's history and the ability to serve as an agent of mission-aligned progress rather than change for the sake of change;
- The confidence and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback, engaging in challenging conversations with grace and a keen sense of emotional intelligence; and
- A commitment to advocating for and fostering a safe and supportive environment for all learners.

Personal Qualities

- Demonstrates empathy and authenticity in interactions, building genuine connections with students, staff, and the broader community;
- Exhibit a deep resonance with the Quaker testimonies;
- Commitment to fostering a culture that embraces diversity and fosters belonging, supported by purposeful practices to maintain and honor the success of all community members;
- Eagerness to engage actively with students, parents, faculty, and staff
- Willingness to prioritize visibility, approachability, and attendance amidst the demands of a busy professional schedule; and
- A commitment to wellness and a focus on supporting their team to seek balance despite the demands of their roles.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Friends Seminary.

[School Website](#)

[Quaker Education](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Belonging](#)

[Virtual Campus Tour](#)

[College Matriculation](#)

[About New York, New York](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates are encouraged to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents as soon as possible:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this position
- A current résumé

Selected candidates may be asked to provide:

- Writing samples specific to this search
- 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)

Materials should be sent to:

Burke Zalosh

Consultant

burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com

Robert D. Vitalo

Vice President, Search and Consulting Services

robert.vitalo@carneysandoe.com

Darryl Ford

Vice President, Education Leadership Services

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The annual salary range for this position is \$700,000-\$850,000. A competitive benefits package that is considerate of the school's location in New York City will also be provided, including health plan, retirement, and housing allowance. These executive benefits will contribute significantly to the head of school's total compensation.