

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR SEARCH

ATLANTA SPEECH SCHOOL Anne & Jim Kenan Preschool

Atlanta, Georgia
kenanpreschool.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission

To bring deep reading to each and every child so they can find their voice to determine their own future and make the greatest difference in the lives of others.

Vision

Literacy and Justice for All

Values

In keeping our collective promise to children, we set the highest expectations for them and ourselves to learn, feel, act and inspire.

At a Glance



Established
1938



Kenan Preschool
enrollment
113



Total Staff: **298**
Kenan Staff: **31**



Student-teacher ratio
7:1



Staff of color
37%



Annual operating budget
\$31M



Lead Teachers with
advanced degrees
100%



Endowment
\$90M



Overview

Katherine Hamm founded the Atlanta Speech School more than 85 years ago, when she moved to Atlanta from St. Louis. Her son, Ben, was deaf and had learned to talk at a school in St. Louis. Armed with the knowledge of how language benefited her son, Mrs. Hamm started her free school with the belief that every child should have that same opportunity: the unlocking of language. Over the decades, the program grew into what we now know as the Atlanta Speech School, the nation's most comprehensive language and literacy center that includes the Wardlaw School, for children with dyslexia and red flags for dyslexia; the Katherine Hamm Center serving children through age five who are deaf and/or hard of hearing; Stepping Stones, for preschool-aged children with a primary diagnosis of a speech or language delay; and the Anne and Jim Kenan Preschool.

In the early 2000s, as reading research advanced, the Speech School additionally launched the Rollins Center for Language & Literacy and its Cox Campus platform to scale literacy teaching statewide, nationally, and beyond. Cox Campus is the only free credit-bearing professional development structured literacy platform that is certified by the International Dyslexia Association and aims to provide free and open access to equity-based, IACET-accredited Science of Reading coursework, content, and professional learning across the continuum--prenatal through structured literacy. Today, more than 380,000 educators in all 50 states and 138 countries use Cox Campus. More than 1.2 million courses have been completed, at no cost to teachers, their schools, or their districts. The work of the on-campus programs of the Atlanta Speech School informs the courses developed for Cox Campus, making the Atlanta Speech School the educational equivalent of a teaching hospital with reach far beyond the children in each classroom. This commitment to professional development across all School programs, as well as across all Cox Campus partnerships, helps to elevate the quality of instruction across the School with the ultimate goal of eradicating illiteracy by providing equitable educational opportunity access to every child- regardless of race, Zip Code, or ethnicity.

Atlanta Speech School is dedicated to helping children reach their full potential as readers, thinkers, and communicators. As part of this prestigious organization, the Anne & Jim Kenan Preschool serves children aged 2–5 and was established as the mainstream preschool to complement the Speech School's specialized programs. Kenan focuses on building and nurturing pre-literacy foundations, oral language development, critical thinking, empathy, and confidence through joyful, research-based learning environments. Kenan preschool children are immersed in conversation, guided play, and language-centered experiences. This intentionality helps them to acquire the pre-literacy skills that lay the foundation for reading and writing. Kenan students develop problem-solving skills, empathetic awareness of the world around them and the executive functions to put all these pieces together for "construction of the deep reading brain."



Kenan Preschool seeks a Director to start July 1, 2026, to lead the school in alignment with the broader mission of the Atlanta Speech School- developing each child's "deep reading brain," the foundation for critical thinking, empathy, and effective communication. As part of the Atlanta Speech School and by extension its Rollins Center for Language & Literacy, the efforts of the Director of the Anne & Jim Kenan preschool will radiate well beyond the School. This is an unmatched opportunity to partner with experts, teachers and scholars in the science of reading, collaborate with engaged families, and support young learners at a pivotal stage of their development. As a key leader at the Atlanta Speech School, the Director of Kenan will be part of a global organization dedicated to advancing literacy through research-based, inclusive practices and a long-standing commitment to equity.

The Director will work closely with the Directors of the Speech School's other programs, the Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Ryan Lee-James, and the Executive Director of Atlanta Speech School, Comer Yates, and the broader administrative team. This role offers the chance to lead a deeply impactful school and contribute to a larger organization whose global reach is both significant and ever-expanding.

Opportunities

- Provide strategic leadership, vision, and execution for the Anne & Jim Kenan Preschool program while ensuring daily support for and engagement with students, parents, and staff.
- Facilitate a highly collaborative team that includes teachers, a curriculum specialist, an admissions coordinator, a preschool counselor, an occupational therapist, a speech-language therapist, and an outplacement coordinator to deliver exceptional services for children ages two through five.
- Ensure continued professional growth and support for both lead and assistant teachers across the Kenan Preschool program.
- Engage a thriving, established preschool community serving children academically in a setting committed to the cultivation of empathy, curiosity, and deep reading.
- Collaborate with the Kenan Preschool's Educational Outplacement Coordinator to assist children and families transitioning to kindergarten.
- Collaborate with the Hamm and Stepping Stones preschool programs to ensure that expertise is shared and that children benefit from a continuum of care and common best practices.
- Refine internal systems, including staff onboarding, performance reviews, staff coaching, parent communication, and progress reports, in collaboration with other program directors and administrative leaders.



- Contribute to the Atlanta Speech School's upcoming strategic plan.
- Affirm the School's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Encourage continued faculty retention, both lead and assistant teachers.
- Foster joy, connection, and exceptional learning in every classroom.

Qualifications and Personal Attributes

Successful candidates will demonstrate many of the following qualifications and attributes:

- A strategic and visionary thinker who facilitates leadership and has a deep commitment to the science of reading.
- A collaborative and relationship-centered leader, eager to partner with an experienced Executive Director, an exceptional Chief Academic Officer, and fellow Directors within the Atlanta Speech School.
- Knowledgeable in early childhood development and children's diverse learning profiles, with an understanding of psychoeducational evaluations- including academic growth, cognitive processes, executive functioning, and social-emotional development.
- Deeply committed to social justice and diversity, with these values embedded in both philosophy and practice.
- An appreciation and ability to implement positive discipline approaches to foster a supportive and respectful classroom environment.
- A visible, engaged presence who leads with curiosity and openness.
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Required Education/Experience

- Master's degree or higher in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Reading, Speech-Language Pathology, Early Childhood Special Education, Psychology, or other related fields from an accredited university
- Minimum of 8-10 years of experience working in early childhood setting or similar experience
- Excellent oral, written, organizational, and interpersonal skills, and the ability to work collaboratively

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about the Kenan Preschool, the Atlanta Speech School, and the School's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. You will also find a video about careers at the School and The Promise, through which the School shares its philosophy around never silencing a child.

[School Website](#)

[The Promise](#)

[Atlanta Speech School](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging](#)

[Join Us!](#)

[About Atlanta, Georgia](#)



To Apply

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

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

Allison Stiles

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