

UPPER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEARCH

COLORADO ACADEMY

Denver, Colorado

coloradoacademy.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Creating curious, kind, courageous, and adventurous learners and leaders.

Values

- Courage.** We foster courage: exploring new challenges in academics, athletics, the arts, and experiential learning.
- Curiosity.** We nurture curiosity: the foundation of lifelong, creative discovery.
- Kindness.** We choose kindness: engaging graciously in an inclusive, joyful community.
- Understanding.** We encourage understanding: listening to others and acting ethically, with integrity and respect.
- Belonging.** We embrace inclusivity: working through education to create empathy and compassion.
- Well-being.** We promote habits of health, both physically and mentally, strengthening resilience and confidence.
- Adaptability.** We believe in a dynamic response to the needs of an ever-changing world.
- Transformation.** We inspire thoughtful individuals who are ready to transform the future.

At a Glance



Established
1906



Upper School Enrollment
454



Faculty in the Upper School
73



Student-faculty ratio
8:1



Students of color
33%



Financial aid awarded
\$5.8M



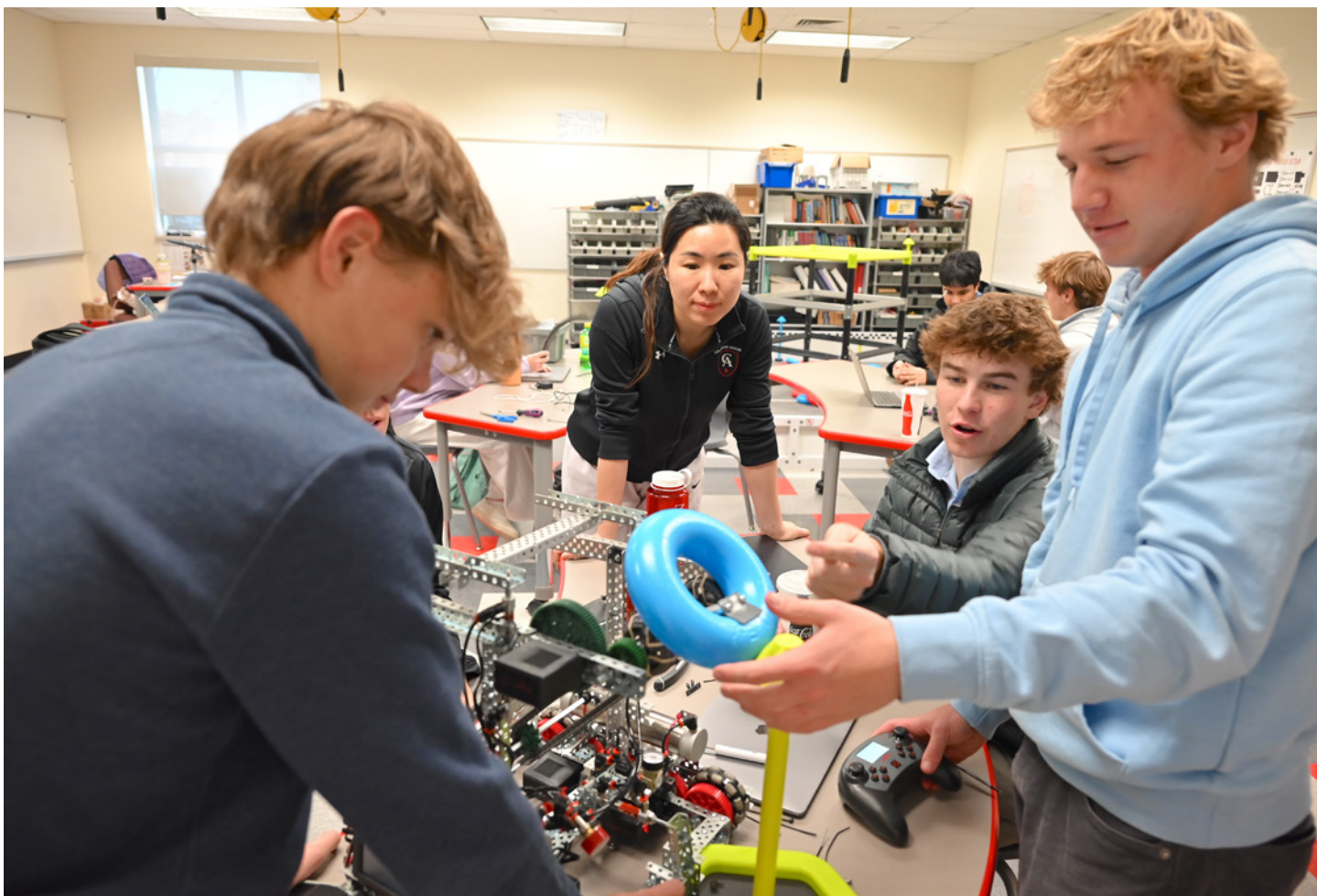
Faculty with advanced degrees
92%



Campus size
94 acres

Total students: 1,048
Total faculty: 270
Average class size: 15
Students receiving aid: 18.4%

Endowment: \$45.3M
Annual operating budget: \$48.5M
Interscholastic sports: 19



Overview

Situated on a picturesque, 95-acre campus in Denver, Colorado Academy (CA) serves approximately 1,050 students from 65 zip codes across the city, from Pre-K through Grade 12. Nationally recognized for its dynamic programming, commitment to inclusivity, and mission of “creating curious, kind, courageous, and adventurous learners and leaders,” CA’s Upper School enrolls approximately 450 students who thrive in a collaborative, forward-looking environment supported by highly skilled faculty, engaged families, and a deep sense of community.

CA seeks an inspiring, student-centered, and visionary leader to serve as its next Upper School Principal, beginning July 2026. This is a distinctive opportunity to lead a division that exemplifies academic excellence, innovation, and whole-child education at one of the country’s premier independent schools. The next Upper School Principal will join Colorado Academy at a time of optimism and momentum—with strong enrollment, a strategic vision for innovation, and a thriving culture of faculty and student engagement, led by Head of School Dr. Mike Davis. The Principal will shape the lives of young people and the educators who teach them—and help ensure CA continues to lead as one of the most dynamic, inclusive, and well-rounded educational institutions in the country.



The Upper School Experience

The Upper School at Colorado Academy is both rigorous and deeply human. Through a blend of traditional disciplines and progressive practices, students are empowered to engage authentically with the world around them. Highlights of the Upper School program include:

- A full complement of Advanced Studies and Research (ASR) classes, through which students develop mastery through depth of study and a learning orientation that connects to the broader world
- Additional coursework that cultivates love of learning—from a multitude of electives in arts, engineering, and entrepreneurship; to math and science Advanced Placement courses; to courses that explore singular topics in great depth; to advanced coursework in three World Languages
- Over 50 clubs and activities, supporting leadership, service, and identity exploration
- Athletics in 19 competitive sports and a culture where students regularly exceed the school's arts requirements
- Robust experiential education, encompassing global travel, outdoor education, and a comprehensive service learning framework
- Junior and Senior Capstone Projects, where students pursue personal passions through self-directed, community-informed projects in the REDI Lab
- Intentionally designed student support, through engaged teachers, supportive counselors, advisors who remain with student cohorts for all four years, and grade level deans

Faculty relish relationships with students and each other (“We have a lot of fun working together.”) and appreciate an environment where they are trusted and respected as professionals. Students describe CA as a place where “there is no one way to be,” and the Upper School proudly cultivates a learning environment where each student is known, respected, and encouraged to pursue their own path.



Opportunities and Challenges

The Upper School Principal serves as the educational leader for grades 9–12 and is a key member of CA's senior administrative team. Reporting to the Head of School, the Principal oversees the nearly 75 faculty and staff of the Upper School, including grade-level deans, the college counseling office, personal counselors, registrar, and teaching faculty. The Principal will guide the continued evolution of a strong academic program while prioritizing student wellness, professional development, and meaningful, inclusive community-building. Working in partnership with the Lower School Principal, Middle School Principal, Assistant Head of School, and other senior leaders, the Upper School Principal will play a critical role in helping the school realize its strategic vision and evolve with our changing world.

The next Upper School Principal will have the opportunity to:

- Continue to refine the Upper School curriculum, with particular attention to evolving best practices in assessment and to the scope and sequence within the division and across the school;
- Further strengthen professional development, mentoring / coaching, onboarding, the culture of feedback, and systems and structures that support equity and high-quality, student-centered instruction across disciplines;
- Assess the Upper School's curricular and co-curricular programs, ensuring that resources of time, personnel, and space are allocated appropriately to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff;
- Identify continued opportunities to clarify systems, policies, and structures, enabling employees to focus on the critical work of building relationships and delivering on the mission of the school; and
- Support CA's commitment to a community that elevates student voice and respects all individuals, ensuring that curriculum and culture reflect the full range of student experiences and identities in the Upper School.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The most competitive candidates for Colorado Academy will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:

- Experience teaching and leading in an Upper School and an appreciation for the challenges and opportunities inherent in a complex, multi-division school;
- Proven ability to inspire, support, and lead faculty in a culture that values both autonomy and collaboration;
- Nuanced understanding of best practices in student-centered pedagogy and curriculum design;
- A track record of inclusive leadership and a strong commitment to equity and belonging;
- A community-building leadership style that is collaborative whenever possible and decisive when necessary, demonstrating approachability, trustworthiness, as well as a commitment to honoring multiple perspectives;
- The ability to communicate verbally and in writing with inspiration and clarity;
- A history of thoughtful innovation moderated by a skillful and sensitive approach to change;
- The willingness to prioritize visibility amidst the demands of a busy professional schedule; and
- Authenticity, kindness, and humility, with a playful spirit and sense of humor.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Colorado Academy.

[School Website](#)

[Upper School Beyond the Classroom](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Upper School Profile](#)

[Culture and Community](#)

[About Denver, Colorado](#)



To Apply

Review of candidate materials will begin immediately. Interested candidates are asked to submit the following materials as **separate PDF documents** as soon as possible:

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

As the process moves forward, selected candidates may be asked to submit:

- Responses to writing prompts 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)

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

Marsha Little

Senior Consultant

marsha.little@carneysandoe.com

Burke Zalosh

Consultant

burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com

The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$195,000 - \$210,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience.