



**Upper School Dean of Students
The Harker School, San Jose, CA
September 2025**

Overview

The Harker School is a private, non-sectarian, coeducational day school in Silicon Valley for students in kindergarten through grade 12 that has earned international recognition for its top-level academics, quality teachers, outstanding facilities, and student achievements. Educating 1,976 students, Harker is the largest independent school of its kind in California, located on beautiful campuses just minutes apart.

Kindness, respect, honesty, integrity, and personal accountability have been at the heart of a Harker education since the school's founding in 1893. Demand by motivated and capable students in Silicon Valley and beyond is very high. Harker students receive a well-rounded education grounded in academics, enriching extracurricular activities and clubs, team-building athletics, a multitude of arts offerings, and an unwavering emphasis on character development. And, most importantly, students develop a lifelong passion for learning. Harker is a supportive, safe, fun, and nurturing place where students make friends for life with their peers, their teachers, and with staff.

Harker seeks an Upper School Dean of Students effective July 1, 2026. The primary goal of the position is to provide leadership that fosters the overall well-being, growth, and success of upper school students, in alignment with the school's mission. The Dean of Students oversees all aspects of student life in the upper school including discipline. The Dean of Students reports directly to the Upper School Division Head and will work closely with, and provide support to the upper school faculty, student leadership, grade level deans, academic counselors, student activities coordinator, community service director, and attendance coordinator. The Dean of Students plays a central role in cultivating a positive school climate, supporting students' academic and personal development, and ensuring a kind and respectful community.

Mission

Our mission is to educate students for success at college and beyond, and to foster kindness, respect, and integrity within a safe and nurturing environment. We achieve academic excellence through the development of intellectual curiosity, personal accountability, and love of learning. Our comprehensive program and exceptional faculty and staff help students discover, develop, and enjoy their unique talents. We honor individuality, embrace diversity, and promote leadership and service, preparing students to take their place as global citizens.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

The School

At Harker, success is something more than just outstanding academic achievement. The school believes in providing a world-class educational experience that both inspires and empowers students to explore, try new things, and discover their unique talents and passions. High-quality academics, broad class offerings, robust extracurricular programs and electives, and outstanding teachers and facilities all define a Harker education.

The teaching team at Harker comprises people who are passionate about their subject areas and dedicated to working with their chosen age groups. 76% of the upper school teachers hold advanced degrees and they are consistently enriching their skill sets with ongoing professional development. Others find time to actively contribute to their professional fields by publishing literary works or academic papers, performing on stage, or receiving artwork commissions.

Outside of the classroom, teachers are mentors, role models, club leaders, and students' biggest fans – cheering them on at sports games, checking out their latest art installation, and giving them high fives for jobs well done. Within the walls of The Harker School, a learning innovation specialist, a global education director and three full-time upper-school librarians work with teachers to optimize their talents through ongoing workshops and 1-1 assistance. Our expert faculty also consistently share their talents with other upper school or K-12 faculty via in-house workshopping, committee work, and constant and consistent collaboration.

In June 2016, Harker became certified as a Bay Area Green Business by the county of Santa Clara. This honor is a culmination of decades of environmental awareness and a continuing effort to bring sustainability to all aspects of the school. Harker's Green Mission is, "Modeling and teaching a sustainable relationship with the environment." Harker takes being green very seriously, in both big and small ways. All three of the newest buildings on the upper school campus are Gold LEED-certified. The school observes Earth Day every day through sustainability education, green initiatives, special student clubs, and a reduced-waste food program. Our Upper School Green Team shares its expertise and insights to enhance our initiatives and work with faculty to advocate within and outside of Harker for initiatives that improve the overall well-being of our community. We also partner with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's recycling programs, which include The Green Education Foundation and Seventh Generation Recycling.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

Fast Facts

- Founded: 1893
- Founding date of the upper school: 1998
- Total students: 1,976 TK-12
- Total number of students in the upper school: 807
- Students of color: 83.88% TK-12
- Total faculty: 221 TK-12
- Total faculty in the upper school: 96
- Faculty with advanced degrees: US 76%,
- Student/teacher ratio at the upper school: 8:1
- Financial aid awarded: \$3.9M plus \$5 tuition reduction
- Students receiving aid: 7.6%



Academics

At Harker's upper school, located at the Saratoga Ave. campus, an expert team of teachers offers students a world-class and well-rounded education. Starting from kindergarten, students encounter a customized experience that allows them to optimize their learning and identify their unique talents. As the students continue through the upper school, you see this customization expand even further. In fact, the options are almost limitless: There are 276 courses offered at the upper school that allow our students to experience our almost unlimited course runway. The upper school gives students in grades 9-12 an educational experience like no other, where they are challenged, engaged, inspired, and supported along their journeys. Harker's experience in education, combined with an integrated curriculum, creates an optimal learning environment. Each student's academic and extracurricular journey is uniquely tailored to individual needs and passions, as well as their social and emotional growth. With 276 total course offerings, 29 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, 23 post-AP courses, and countless programs and extracurricular activities, students not only reach their academic goals at the upper school but are able to explore their areas of interest deeply. Upper school students use a 1:1 laptop program. Harker also offers support systems including academic and college counseling to ensure each student's continued success. With a 100% acceptance rate into colleges, universities, and conservatories, students leave Harker prepared for continued success.



Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

The Arts

Harker is deeply committed to arts education, believing art is an essential element of a complete curriculum. The arts are woven into everything at Harker, creating a learning environment that promotes creativity, self-confidence, and collaboration. Every year, students at each grade level perform at least one staged production for families and friends.

Harker's comprehensive arts education program starts in lower school and carries through to middle and upper school where the arts are part of academic requirements. In the performing arts, students' creative expression and confidence are nurtured through dance, drama, vocal and instrumental music, and musical theater. After school, the program continues with choirs, dance classes, orchestras, and a variety of performance bands. Upper school students interested in diving deeper into their crafts can explore the Conservatory Certificate Program, a four-year performing arts course of study with special attention paid to evolving each student's discipline, creating portfolios, and performing in the senior showcase. Rotating visiting performing artists such as Ron McCurdy and David Amram work with our students to create an even deeper performing arts expertise.

The visual arts program gives students a gradual introduction to the technical skills they need as they dig deeper into their creativity. Students try unique course offerings, such as 3D art: glass, filmmaking, ceramics, sculpture, graphic arts, and more. Many of the visual arts teachers are working artists themselves. Rotating exhibits can be found throughout the school, and annual art exhibitions allow the entire student body to celebrate Harker's artists and their creative accomplishments. A generous endowment allows renowned visiting artists to teach and work with our students for at least one week of the school year.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

Athletics

Athletics are an important part of any student experience and in the upper school, Harker supports the academic success and extracurricular pursuits of its student athletes. Athletic coaches, program directors, counselors, and teachers actively follow our student athletes, ensuring they are effectively balancing their academic and extracurricular commitments.

Upper school sports teams compete in a variety of local leagues, including the West Bay Athletic League, Santa Clara Valley Athletic League, Peninsula Athletic League, and Bay Football League. The school fields 39 teams in 14 sports including baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse (girls), soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and water polo.

Student athletes further develop their skills in off-season strength and conditioning programs and training camps. Accolades include numerous league championships, record-setting performances, and athletes continuing their competitive careers in college.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

Mission Driven Programs at the Upper School

Harker's ability to customize and optimize its upper school program via its academic and extracurricular programs is nearly limitless. Below is a listing of some of the many programs at the upper school.

- **John Near & Mitra Family Scholar Grant Program**

The scholar grant program was created in 2009 as part of the John Near Excellence in History Endowment to allow select senior students and their teacher-mentors the opportunity to pursue an independent, yearlong research paper on a topic of their choice in the discipline of United States history or American government. The Mitra program was added in 2011 to include other humanities subjects.

- **Harker Research Symposium**

Since 2006, Harker's annual science research symposium has been a chance for our students to present their original research to the Harker community. Previous keynote speakers include Dr. James McClintock, climate scientist and author; Dr. Claire Max, professor of astrophysics and director of the Center for Adaptive Optics at University of California, Santa Cruz; Salman Khan, founder of Khan Academy; and Dr. David Baltimore, Nobel Prize-winning biologist.

- **Business and Entrepreneurship Program**

Like a booming startup, Harker's student-led business and entrepreneurship (B.E.) initiative has rapidly expanded to offer a variety of inspiring programs since its launch in 2013. Our B.E. department develops, fosters and provides business and entrepreneurial education, leadership opportunities and career preparatory programs to upper school students. CareerConnect, BECon, TedX, and the B&E Podcast Series are just a few of the many opportunities for our students to network and enhance their entrepreneurial acumen.

- **Harker Journalism**

With four print and online high-quality publications, Harker journalism indeed has their finger on the pulse of the upper school experience. Since 2016 the department has received 15 National and Columbia Scholastic Press Association top awards.

- **Student Diversity Collation (SDC)**

Established in 2020, the goal of the SDC is to help create a more inclusive community at Harker and provide a forum for students to discuss issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as encourage students to work toward justice for marginalized people.

- **Harker LIFEBoard**

In conjunction with the LIFE (Living with Intent, Focus, and Enthusiasm) director, students explore ways to enhance the health and well-being of our whole community. Students offer their insights and expertise as we offer a wide variety of wellness services for students and education opportunities for parents.



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 • F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com • carneysandoe.com

Professional Qualities

The Harker School is interested in candidates who can support, articulate, and promote a mission-driven, inclusive and equitable student-centered model of education. Along with excellent organizational and leadership skills, ideal candidates will have backgrounds that demonstrate most, if not all, of the following:

- Ability to uphold the school's mission and philosophy in all aspects of student life
- Ability to synthesize and articulate the school's student life and disciplinary vision and to inspire and motivate others towards further strengthening the upper school student experience
- A warm, approachable, and visible presence on campus that invites and respects the views of others, yet is decisive when needed
- Highly organized, persistent, and able to motivate others to achieve
- Deep understanding of school operations, mission, and philosophy
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and conflict-resolution skills
- Strong organizational skills, and the ability to prioritize and manage multiple responsibilities
- Proficiency with internal school systems and technology
- Ability to make effective, timely program decisions in response to daily challenges
- Discretion in handling confidential information
- Positive, adaptable, and collaborative approach to problem-solving
- An advanced degree is preferred

Below, you will find specific details related to this position. As with any leadership role at Harker, it is our expectation that the individual entrusted with these responsibilities approaches them with a deep commitment to excellence and a strong sense of ownership. The list of responsibilities outlined below represents the tasks associated with the role, but not the mindset we hope you bring to each endeavor. True leadership at Harker is rooted in service, a willingness to invest the necessary time, and a dedication to guiding others. These qualities are not only central to this position, but to every leadership role at Harker.



Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

Key Responsibilities

Student Life & Engagement

- Collaborate with Class Deans through regular meetings; support class-specific needs and financial paperwork.
- Support and guide student groups:
 - Student Council: Weekly meetings, officer elections and training, follow-up on concerns
 - Associated Student Body (ASB): Weekly meetings, summer leadership camps, mentoring of elected leaders
 - Honor Council: Collaborate as needed on student/faculty academic integrity topics and concerns.
 - School Clubs: Oversight of clubs, club fairs, budgeting, vendor orders, and account reconciliations.
- Partner with the Student Activities Coordinator to develop and maintain the Spirit program and yearly events (e.g., dances, rallies); attendance at major events is required.
- Oversee the Community Service Director, award programs, and verification of service hours.

Discipline & Accountability

- Create and enforce rules as outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook.
- Maintain records of discipline, including detentions, Saturday Fives, and suspensions.
- Oversee revisions and publication of the Student/Parent Handbook in coordination with the Office of Communication.

Emergency Procedures

- Lead the development, implementation, and ongoing review of the upper school's emergency preparedness and response plans.
- Coordinate and conduct regular safety drills (fire, lockdown, earthquake, etc.).
- Train faculty and students on safety procedures and emergency response protocols.
- Assess risks and vulnerabilities on campus, making recommendations for safety improvements.
- Oversee communication systems and protocols for rapid, clear messaging during crises.

Programs & Events

- Organize and budget for annual class trips, including frosh orientation, sophomore and junior trips, senior retreat (fall) and senior trip (spring).
- Organize and oversee student events (e.g., spirit weeks, dances, prom, senior sunrise).
- Supervise the Attendance Office staff, ensuring accurate records of tardies, absences, trancies, and appeals processes.
- Manage student lockers (ordering, repairs, assignments, and end-of-year checks).

Community Relations & Traffic

- Oversee safe and efficient campus traffic flow, including drop-off/pickup and parking.
- Communicate traffic guidelines to families, staff, and students to ensure compliance.
- Serve as liaison with neighbors and community groups, addressing concerns constructively.



Carney, Sandoe & Associates

The Search Group

200 High Street, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02110

T 617.542.0260 · F 617.933.3426

search@carneysandoe.com · carneysandoe.com

Salary range: 130K-175K

To Apply

Please send resume and a letter of intent to Rice Bryan (rice.bryan@carneysandoe.com) and Amanda Gastel (amanda.gastel@carneysandoe.com).