

MIDDLE SCHOOL HEAD SEARCH

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NASHVILLE

Nashville, Tennessee

usn.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

University School of Nashville models the best educational practices. In an environment that represents the cultural and ethnic composition of Metropolitan Nashville, USN fosters each student’s intellectual, artistic, and athletic potential, valuing and inspiring integrity, creative expression, a love of learning, and the pursuit of excellence.

At a Glance



Established
1915



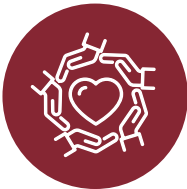
Middle School enrollment
320



Teaching faculty
132



Endowment
\$45M



Students of color
36%



Financial aid awarded
\$4.7M



Faculty with advanced degrees
70%



Annual operating budget
\$35M

Total enrollment: 1,079
Lower School enrollment: 352
High School enrollment: 407
Employees: 349
Average faculty tenure: 14 years

Students receiving aid: 21%
Athletics: 100+ teams across 3 seasons
Campuses: 7-acre Midtown campus
and 81-acre River campus



Overview

University School of Nashville is a premier, progressive, all-gender K-12 school of approximately 1,100 students situated in the heart of one of the fastest-growing, most creative, and welcoming cities in the nation. With a long-standing commitment through the years of reflecting the cultural and ethnic diversity of metropolitan Nashville and adjacent to Vanderbilt University, a nationally renowned research university, USN has distinguished itself in cultivating a genuinely equitable and inclusive community of academic excellence. Fostering a deep sense of belonging, independence, and support for all students, faculty enable students to develop their critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and individual talents and passions. Students come first at USN; through the academic and co-curricular programs, they are encouraged to voice their opinions, pursue individual passions, and lead change-making efforts.

Founded in 1915 as Peabody Demonstration School, the school quickly established an exceptional reputation for its excellent curriculum, faculty, and early commitment to diversity. Facing a decision by Peabody College (which became part of Vanderbilt University a few years later) to close its demonstration school in 1974, a group of parents, alumni, students, and teachers formed University School of Nashville on the demonstration school campus in 1975. USN remains committed to building on the strengths of this exceptional history and reputation and continues to enjoy a close relationship with Vanderbilt University.

Now, USN seeks to hire its next Head of Middle School (grades 5-8), a position which will begin on July 1, 2026. The next Head of Middle School will lead a happy and healthy student body, a dedicated and talented faculty, and a robust middle school administrative team. Reporting to the Director (the equivalent of Head of School), the Head of Middle School will lead with transparency and mission-alignment, guided by a love for middle school-aged students and an expertise in best practices in middle school education. Collaborating closely with other divisional leaders, the Head of Middle school will continue to curate a welcoming middle school community for students, their caregivers, and the middle school faculty.

Opportunities and Challenges

USN seeks a highly relational Head of Middle School who can lead by example, through visibility, and with a compassionate approach to middle school education. Working alongside the Director and the other divisional leaders, the Head of Middle School will:

Amplify the USN Community, Cultivate Joy and a Positive Environment

- Establish visionary leadership for the next chapter and the strategic vision of USN and the Middle School;
- Work closely with the middle school administrative team to create a positive learning environment for students;
- Actively engage with all members of the school community, particularly within the middle school, ensuring visibility and participation;
- Build trusting, transparent relationships with all members of the USN community, with a particular care and focus on middle school parents.



Strengthen USN Community Relationships and Support Systems

- Nurture a school community that remains true to its demonstration school roots, where risk-taking, innovation, and a culture of trial and error celebrate both successes and failures as essential steps in the process and progress of learning;
- Lead, support, and partner with the dedicated middle school faculty;
- Foster each middle school student's artistic and athletic potential through collaborative partnerships and programmatic support of subject area specialists and the Middle School Athletic Director;
- Enhance the communication structures within the division, with continued focus on curricular and co-curricular alignment across divisions;
- Partner with the heads of the lower and middle schools in creating greater opportunities for cross-divisional alignment;
- Ensure the continued academic growth and well-being of the middle school students, with particular focus on best practices in social-emotional and cognitive development for the age group;
- Lead and pursue best practices in faculty professional development;
- Steward and govern a well-defined budget for the middle school.

Qualities and Personal Attributes

The most compelling applicants will offer the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Deep experience as an educator and visionary leader in a Middle School setting; a proven appreciation for the uniqueness of the middle-school-aged student.
- Joyful, approachable, and highly visible disposition—an upbeat presence who delights in the rhythms of school life, engages with students and teachers alike, and models optimism in ways that create a happy and thriving learning community.
- A proven ability to collaborate with faculty, listen well, and honor the professional expertise of educators.
- Experience collaborating with members of an administrative team, with the ability to make difficult decisions, aligning with the USN mission and middle school core beliefs.
- Ability to communicate effectively and provide consistent and timely information to faculty and families.
- A strategic approach to enhancing middle school programming to serve students, faculty, and parents better.
- Strength in building and maintaining connections and community between colleagues, divisions, parents, and students.
- Culturally responsive and community-focused, embracing inclusion, celebrating diverse perspectives, and sustaining USN's family-oriented culture through meaningful engagement with students, colleagues, and parents.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about University School of Nashville.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Framework](#)

[School History](#)

[About Nashville, Tennessee](#)

[School Profile](#)



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 particular position
- A current résumé

Selected candidates may be asked to provide:

- 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)

Rice Bryan

Senior Consultant

rice.bryan@carneysandoe.com

Kim Peeples

Senior Consultant

kim.peeples@carneysandoe.com