



## HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: July 2027

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Nichols School

Buffalo, New York | [nicholsschool.org](http://nicholsschool.org)



Carney  
Sandoe  
& ASSOCIATES

# MISSION STATEMENT

*“Our aim is to train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life, and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service.”*

## At a Glance



**1892**  
established



**560**  
total enrollment



**75**  
total faculty



**8:1**  
student-faculty ratio



**30 acres**  
campus size



# OVERVIEW

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Carney Sandoe has been engaged by the Board of Trustees at Nichols School (Buffalo, NY) to conduct a search for a permanent Head of School for 2027-2028. These needs have come about because of the unfortunate recent passing of Nichols School's highly regarded Head of School, Chris Burner. The School is deeply appreciative of all that Chris accomplished over the years and is focused on continuing to move forward on his many initiatives.

Nichols School, located in one of Buffalo's most attractive urban residential locations and founded in 1892, is a co-educational, independent college preparatory day school for grades 5-12. Known for its rigorous academics, small class sizes, and dedicated teaching faculty, Nichols excels in developing well-rounded, ethical individuals through strong academics, arts, athletics, and community life. The School emphasizes critical thinking, innovation, and a balanced life. When stepping on campus visitors are impressed with the school's energy, vitality, and spirit. This is a school with a long history of excellence and an impressive presence and reputation not only in the school community, but also across Western New York State and the nation.

Nichols' history is one distinguished by thoughtful growth and continuous improvement - as an institution in service to its students. The School has been served by a series of leading educators who have worked with the committed Board of Trustees to advance the mission of excellence across the School, expand state-of-the-art facilities, and maintain the financial strength of this debt-free School.

The Head of School will work to foster a culture where excellence and personal growth are at the heart of daily life. The next Head of School will join a community that offers both breadth of opportunity and the close relationships that make a school feel like family. Student, faculty, and parent relationships are central to a Nichols education. This leader will inspire faculty and staff, support student well-being, and help ensure that high standards, balance, and connection remain at the heart of the Nichols experience.



# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Chief among the priorities, opportunities, and challenges facing Nichols new Head of School are to:

- Ensure that the pursuit of excellence and accountability are the standards that permeate and drive all aspects of the School;
- Communicate an inspiring vision and enhance the School's reputation and position in a competitive admission market;
- Work with admissions and marketing to articulate and promote what makes Nichols special;
- Hire, develop, support and retain mission-aligned faculty, staff, and administrators;
- As the school's academic leader, identify aspects of the program that require strengthening and develop a plan to achieve successful improvement;
- Be a visible, connected, and engaged presence on campus, at school events and alumni gatherings, and in the greater Buffalo community;
- Work with the CFO to prudently manage the school's annual budget with particular attention to enrollment, net tuition revenue, and expenses;
- Work with the Board and the administration on the planning and implementation of two major academic building renovation projects;
- Work closely with the active, dedicated Board of Trustees and Board committees to evaluate/evolve the school's strategic plan.



**\$48M**  
endowment



**40**  
clubs and organizations



**55+**  
athletic teams



**24**  
AP courses



**35+**  
service opportunities

# QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Nichols School's next Head of School should possess an impressive record as a proven school leader who has successfully managed roles of considerable administrative responsibility.



## Professional Qualifications

- The ability to articulate a vision and strategy for continual growth and improvement, as well as the skills and thoughtfulness needed to implement effective changes;
- Experience in every aspect of school operations, including managing and developing personnel, fundraising, strategic planning, and Board relations;
- Demonstrated record of working in close partnership with an engaged parent community that has appropriately high expectations of the School.
- An understanding of the compelling benefits and opportunities provided by a leading independent school in a competitive market with strong public and Catholic schools.



## Leadership Style

- A leader committed to the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of the School;
- A strong leadership style built on approachability, responsiveness, and transparency;
- A strategic thinker who considers and values different ideas and points of view, but who is decisive when moving forward;
- An effective communicator who offers clear, direct expectations and follows through with accountability;
- A demonstrated history of implementing thoughtful strategic change, while maintaining awareness of and respect for the School's history and traditions.



## Personal Qualities

- A commitment to high visibility and an eagerness to engage actively with students, colleagues, parents, and alumni;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- The ability to inspire others in the pursuit of excellence.

# LEARN MORE

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- [School Website](#)

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- [School History](#)

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- [College Matriculation](#)

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- [About Buffalo, New York](#)

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- [Buffalo Relocation Guide](#)





# TO APPLY

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

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

Select 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)
- Writing samples specific to this search

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*The annual salary range for this position is \$375,000 to \$500,000. A competitive benefits package will also be provided, including health plan, retirement, tuition remission, housing allowance. These executive benefits will contribute significantly to the head of school's total compensation.*



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