



HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL

Start Date: July 2027

Seattle Academy of Arts & Sciences

Seattle, Washington | seattleacademy.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

Seattle Academy is a dynamic community that challenges students to QUESTION, IMAGINE, and CREATE in order to CONTRIBUTE boldly to a changing world. See our mission in action below.

At a Glance



1983
established



1,350 total enrollment
866 upper school enrollment



45%
students of color



175 (115 US faculty)
total faculty



7:1
student-faculty ratio



OVERVIEW

Seattle Academy of Arts & Sciences (SAAS) is a vibrant, dynamic independent school serving roughly 1,350 students in grades 6–12 on its urban Capitol Hill campus in Seattle, Washington. Rooted in the guiding principle of “Know the Kid,” SAAS is a community where students are challenged, supported, and celebrated as individuals. The school combines academic rigor with creativity, intellectual curiosity, and a deep belief in the transformative power of relationships. Students are encouraged to discover their passions, engage meaningfully with the world around them, and contribute to a community that values an entrepreneurial mindset, healthy risk-taking, and belonging.

Seattle Academy’s next Head of Upper School will join a division of 900 students drawn from 55 different sending schools across the city. Characterized by its energy, ambition, and commitment to student-centered learning, the Upper School is entering an exciting new chapter with the opening of a new building in August 2025. Faculty members know their students deeply and work collaboratively to support their growth as scholars, artists, athletes, leaders, and citizens. The school seeks a leader who can bring clarity to a complex and dynamic environment, confidence in navigating change, and a deep commitment to the relationships that have long defined the SAAS experience.

This role offers the opportunity to lead a community that embraces both innovation and reflection, where relationships matter deeply and where students are encouraged to bring their full selves to school each day. As the Upper School continues to grow and evolve, the next Head of Upper School will help shape a shared vision for the future—strengthening community, fostering excellence, and ensuring that the systems, structures, and student experience evolve in ways that reflect the creativity, humanity, and sense of possibility that define SAAS.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Upper School is entering a pivotal and exciting moment. After years of growth, the division now has a new home designed to support the energy, creativity, and ambition of a 900-student Upper School. The next Head of Upper School will have the opportunity to help the community fully realize the potential of this new chapter—strengthening a shared sense of purpose, elevating student voice and leadership, and ensuring that the school’s values of Trust, Respect, Integrity, and Responsibility are reflected in the daily life of the community.

As the Upper School continues to evolve, it also seeks greater coherence and consistency. The next Head of Upper School will help strengthen the systems, structures, and communication practices that support a large and complex division, ensuring that expectations are clear, decisions are transparent, and students and adults alike understand their shared responsibilities. Success in this work will require a leader who communicates with clarity, makes decisions with confidence, and approaches challenges with humanity. Accountability will be viewed not as punishment, but as an expression of care, belonging, and commitment to a common set of expectations.





Supporting and retaining exceptional faculty will be equally important. The Upper School seeks a visible, relationship-centered leader who builds trust through consistency, invests in professional growth, and fosters a culture of collaboration, inquiry, and continuous improvement. Throughout this work, the next Head will advance Seattle Academy's commitment to inclusion and belonging by ensuring that these values are embedded in systems, decision-making, and everyday practice.

Ultimately, this role is for a leader who can balance individual care with collective responsibility, preserve what makes SAAS distinctive while helping it evolve, and guide a large, diverse community with clarity, confidence, and humanity. The opportunity is significant: to shape the next chapter of a dynamic Upper School division and help an already extraordinary community become even stronger, more connected, and more aligned.



\$15M

Financial aid
awarded



25%

students receiving
aid



\$30M

endowment



1 city block

(7 buildings)
campus size

Core Values

Trust, Respect, Integrity, and
Responsibility

DESIRED EXPERIENCE AND QUALITIES

The strongest candidates will bring heart, creativity, backbone, and vision. They will understand that SAAS is a place where students are encouraged to embrace ambiguity, take meaningful risks, and discover who they are—and they will lead with that same spirit. Energized by the scale, pace, and complexity of the Upper School, they will bring the clarity, confidence, and humanity needed to strengthen community, support excellence, and ensure that accountability and care go hand in hand.



Key Qualities

- **Visionary Culture Builder:** Co-creates a compelling vision for the Upper School and inspires the community to move toward it together.
- **Collaborative and Empathetic Leader:** Builds trust quickly, listens deeply, and leads with clarity, confidence, and humanity.
- **Systems-Minded Operator:** Designs structures that bring coherence, predictability, and accountability to a large and complex division.
- **Change-Ready Strategist:** Innovates thoughtfully, manages complexity with steadiness, and keeps the community focused on what matters most.
- **Direct Communicator:** Speaks plainly, listens actively, communicates transparently, and follows through.
- **Mission-Champion:** Shows up for students, faculty, and families with conviction, presence, and care.
- **Resilient and Steady Presence:** Handles pressure with perspective, grit, emotional intelligence, and good humor.
- **Talent Developer:** Attracts, develops, and supports exceptional educators while building strong, aligned teams.
- **Community Connector:** Harnesses the creativity, energy, and diversity of Seattle and leverages community partnerships to enrich the student experience.
- **Community and Excellence Builder:** Strengthens a culture of trust, belonging, and shared responsibility while establishing the clear expectations, accountability, and support that help students and adults thrive.



Professional Experience

- Demonstrated success working with diverse communities and engaging dynamic adolescents in an urban school environment.
- Experience leading culture-building initiatives that strengthen belonging, shared responsibility, and accountability.
- Administrative experience supporting, supervising, and developing faculty with clarity, consistency, and care.
- A record of building systems that improve communication, alignment, decision-making, and follow-through.
- Demonstrated ability to navigate difficult conversations, engage in candid dialogue, and make thoughtful decisions in complex situations.
- Experience designing and implementing organizational structures that support a strong, student-centered educational program.



Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- Exceptional interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate clearly, purposefully, and transparently.
- A visible, approachable presence in the daily life of the school.
- An energetic, collaborative leadership style that builds trust, shared ownership, and collective momentum.
- Creative problem-solving skills grounded in humility, curiosity, and a growth mindset.
- Strategic thinking paired with the ability to move ideas from concept to action.
- A deep and nuanced understanding of inclusion, belonging, and the complex landscape students navigate today.
- Strong collaborative instincts and a demonstrated commitment to shared leadership.
- Knowledge of best practices in student life, culture-building, and community systems.
- Skill in recruiting, developing, and retaining diverse, mission-aligned faculty.
- A deep commitment to adolescent development, student engagement, and the full student experience.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [Four Core Guiding Principles](#)
- [School Profile](#)
- [College Matriculation](#)
- [About Seattle, Washington](#)





TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact John Faubert or Heather in confidence. Candidates should submit the following materials as separate PDF documents.

- A cover letter expressing their interest in and alignment with this position
- A current and thorough résumé which highlights relevant experience

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

- 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)

JOHN FAUBERT

Senior Consultant

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Heather Flewelling

Consultant

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The full-time salary range for this position is \$210,000 - \$240,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, education background, and expertise.



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