



Chief of Staff

About the School

Synapse School, founded in 2008 and located in the heart of Menlo Park, CA, is an innovative, TK–8 independent school dedicated to rethinking and reimagining education. Synapse educates a community of Change Makers by combining social-emotional learning, leading-edge academics, and the practice of innovation. The school believes deeply in the capacity of children and creates integrated academic, social, and creative experiences that spark curiosity, discovery, and a lifelong love of learning. Drawing students from across the San Francisco Bay Area, Synapse stands as a distinctive community for families who value a bold, forward-looking approach to education.

A Synapse education is designed to spark curiosity and wonder, weaving together academics, social-emotional growth, and creativity so that each reinforces the others. Learning extends well beyond the classroom, and peers, faculty, families, and staff routinely come together to support one another and to celebrate the work of the community. As a lab school, Synapse actively explores the use of AI and emerging technologies across teaching, learning, and operations. It is a place for people who enjoy being in schools and who bring energy, perspective, and a collaborative spirit—colleagues who are open to experimentation, continuous learning, and using technology as a tool for innovation and growth.

Job Overview

A newly created role at the school, the Chief of Staff at Synapse will serve as a trusted partner and right hand to the Head of School, with a central focus on leading and strengthening how the school manages and develops its people. This is a director-level leadership role for someone energized by growing others—guiding performance management, coaching leaders and managers, and helping staff navigate change and interpersonal challenges with steadiness and care.



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

Reporting directly to the Head of School, the Chief of Staff will play a pivotal role in the functioning of the school's day-to-day operations and serve as a close collaborator to the senior leadership team. The successful candidate will pair genuine people leadership with strong organizational instincts, bringing diplomacy, discretion, and a get-it-done spirit to every relationship and responsibility.

Opportunities

- Partner with the Head of School to strengthen how Synapse manages, develops, and supports its people across the organization.
- Lead the performance management cycle, to include goal-setting, performance reviews, and individualized growth and improvement plans.
- Coach and mentor school leaders and managers, building their capacity to lead their teams effectively and hold their staff accountable.
- Serve as a steady, trusted resource for navigating sensitive personnel matters and interpersonal dynamics with empathy, discretion, and sound judgment.
- Support staff through periods of change, cultivating a culture of accountability, resilience, and shared purpose.
- Provide strategic partnership and executive support to the Head of School, managing priorities, communication, and confidential correspondence.
- Oversee key operational systems, including the school's master calendar, and refine the processes that keep the school running smoothly.
- Lead the planning and execution of major school-wide events and community gatherings.
- Serve as a key liaison across departments, advancing strategic initiatives and building strong internal workflows.

Preferred Qualifications

- Minimum of five years' experience in a role with meaningful people-management responsibility, ideally within an independent school or mission-driven organization.
- Bachelor's degree required; an advanced degree is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience coaching and developing others and leading performance management processes, including reviews and growth or improvement plans.
- A track record of handling sensitive personnel matters with fairness, discretion, and care.



**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

- Exceptional organizational, problem-solving, and time-management skills, with excellent written and oral communication.
- Comfort adopting new technologies, including AI; proficiency with Google Workspace and digital calendar tools. Familiarity with school systems such as Blackbaud or Veracross is a plus.

Qualities/Traits

- Discernment/Judgement
- Diplomatic/Discreet
- Emotional Intelligence
- Relational/empathetic
- Honest/trustworthy
- Calm/unfazed
- An ability to “Coach at arms’ length” (professional, but supportive)

The salary range for this position is \$160,000-\$210,000.

To Apply

Interested candidates should submit a **resume** and **cover letter** to:

John Faubert

Director of Placement
Carney Sandoe & Associates
john.faubert@carneysandoe.com

and

Amanda Gastel

Placement Counselor
Carney Sandoe & Associates
amanda.gastel@carneysandoe.com

Please do not contact the school directly.



**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