



# AFS

Abington Friends School

## UPPER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Start Date: July 2027

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Abington Friends School

Jenkintown, Pennsylvania | [abingtonfriends.net](http://abingtonfriends.net)



Carney  
Sandoe  
& ASSOCIATES

# MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Abington Friends School, grounded in Quaker principles and practices, is to cultivate intellectual excellence, foster strength of character, and support the growth of each student's unique talents, while nurturing the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being of the whole child.

## At a Glance



**1697**  
established



**590 (293 US)**  
total enrollment



**53%**  
students of color



**73 (33 US)**  
total faculty



**71%**  
faculty with  
advanced degrees



**8:1**  
student-faculty ratio



# OVERVIEW

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Founded in 1697, Abington Friends School (AFS) is one of the oldest Quaker schools in the nation located just north of Philadelphia in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania. The school enrolls 590 students across its three divisions, with 293 students in the Upper School, and educates a richly diverse community of learners — 53% of students identify as students of color and 65% receive financial aid. Now in its fourth century of educating students, AFS is defined by an authentic commitment to its Quaker mission and values, a casual warmth and supportive community, and a faculty whose deep relationships with students are widely described as the school's greatest strength. Students are seen, known and valued at AFS. The School's three divisional buildings—centered by the Faulkner Library and Learning Center—are located on a 64-acre picturesque campus which also includes an arboretum. The new Richard N. Berman Athletics Center, music and fine arts spaces, and outdoor fields and woods foster student learning and the historic 1699 Abington Friends Meetinghouse serves as the gathering space for Quaker worship and is the heart of the school. In July of 2024, Dr. Nicole Hood became the school's 10<sup>th</sup> head of school in modern history.

Abington Friends School remains true to the goal of providing a powerful educational program within a community grounded in the ethical and spiritual tenets of Quakerism. The school's Quaker foundation lives in its faculty and its practices — reflection, silence, and continuing revelation — and shapes an approach to learning that emphasizes depth over breadth and personal challenge over external pressure. The school is especially proud of its emphasis on experiential learning, evident across the grades, including travel programs and experiential intensives. In the Upper School, the community's ambition is centered on three outcomes drawn from its planning work: agile learners, ethical community members, and agents of impact. At AFS, the Upper School promotes academic scholarship through a rigorous core curriculum that emphasizes strong skills in writing, research and analysis. Students build college-ready transcripts while enjoying significant individual choice within and beyond graduation requirements. An array of engaging electives empowers students to pursue their passions while honing their abilities as real-world scholars. To support deeper learning, AFS structures the day with fewer, longer class periods and integrates faculty office hours and community time to nurture social-emotional growth and connection. The AFS Upper School program also includes opportunities for students to explore diverse courses, electives, and activities that align with their strengths and interests. Whether diving into new challenges or building on existing talents, students are encouraged to grow with confidence, supported by a community that values both academic excellence and personal development.





AFS seeks an inspiring, student-centered, and visionary leader to serve as its next Upper School Director, beginning July 2027. This is a distinctive opportunity to lead a division that exemplifies whole-child education and innovation. The next Upper School Director will join Dr. Nicole Hood and Abington Friends School at a time of optimism and momentum—with a strategic vision for education, and a thriving culture of faculty and student engagement. The Upper School Director will lead a 293-student division served by 33 faculty. In addition, the Upper School Director will oversee the daily life, program, faculty, and culture of the division, working closely with a recently reconstituted administrative and leadership team, including the Dean of Studies and Dean of Students. The Upper School Director will partner across divisions on student experience and enrollment representing the Upper School on the school's Administrative Council. The role calls for a leader who can build reliable day-to-day systems and shared language while preserving the warmth, creativity, and relationships that distinguish AFS.

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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The next Upper School Director will step into a division with deep strengths and a clear appetite for renewal.

**Defining and telling the AFS story.** The next Director will help articulate a powerful, confident, divisional story--consistent with the entire school--about who AFS is and what its students achieve. There is a desire for a shared language to define rigor internally and to communicate the Upper School's academic excellence. The next Director will also be a partner who helps to prioritize and strengthen the case for AFS in a competitive marketplace.

**Centering Quaker roots and celebrating joy.** The next Director will honor and enliven the Quaker Testimonies, practice, and Quaker-informed decision-making that community members consider essential to AFS while finding and celebrating joy of learning in a busy division.





**Building systems, consistency, and accountability.** There is a desire to move from a culture that has been highly creative and relational toward one that pairs that creativity with reliable systems, consistent programming, and clear accountability. The next Director will be asked to strengthen systems without diminishing the individualized, student-centered character the community treasures.

**Supporting all learners.** AFS's diversity of learners is described as both its greatest strength and its greatest challenge. The community is working to develop plans and systems to support all learners including those who need further academic challenge and those who need additional learning support. The next Director will provide leadership on the learning support program.

**Deepening advisory, SEL, and experiential learning.** The community sees room to leverage its advisory program and its social-emotional learning work (including a newly launched RULER program) more fully, and to make experiential learning more concrete in the Upper School.



**65%**  
students receiving  
aid



**\$20M**  
endowment



**\$15M**  
annual operating  
budget



**64 acres**  
campus size

# QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The next Upper School Director will bring a combination of professional experience and personal qualities that reflect the needs and values expressed by the AFS community.



## Professional Qualifications

Abington Friends seeks a Director with the experience to lead a diverse, student-centered Upper School.

- Teaching experience and time in the classroom, which the community values as a foundation for relating to faculty and students.
- Administrative experience in a school division, with the capacity to support, supervise, develop, and evaluate faculty.
- A record of building systems that improve consistency, communication, alignment, decision-making, and follow-through.
- Demonstrated success building and sustaining culture within a diverse community of learners.
- Experience with, and understanding of, Quaker education and Quaker process — or the disposition and commitment to learn and honor it, which the community holds as essential.
- Demonstrated ability to hold multiple truths and navigate difficult conversations and make thoughtful, transparent decisions with faculty, students, and families.



## Personal Qualities

The community seeks a dynamic leader who is approachable and relational, and also clear, decisive, and accountable.

- A visible, present, and approachable presence in the daily life of the division, who knows students and builds genuine relationships.
- The ability to set high expectations and hold people accountable — a "warm demander."
- The capacity to discern, say hard things, listen, and be decisive.
- Strong communication skills and the ability to create shared language and a consistent story about the school.
- A collaborative leadership style that balances shared and distributed leadership with empowered decision-making.
- Charisma, presence, and the ability to build community confidence and morale.
- Flexibility and comfort with discomfort — the ability to hold multiple truths and remain intellectually agile.
- Genuine investment in adolescent development, student agency, and the full student experience.
- An entrepreneurial, roll-up-your-sleeves spirit and a commitment to being present to the co-curricular and athletic life of the school.
- A willingness to invest in this community over time, leading with staying power.

# LEARN MORE

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- [School Website](#)
- [School History](#)
- [Quaker Education](#)
- [Equity, Justice, and Engagement](#)
- [Virtual Campus Tour](#)
- [College Matriculation](#)





# 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;
- 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) to:

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**BURKE ZALOSH**

Senior Consultant

[burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com](mailto:burke.zalosh@carneysandoe.com)

**DARRYL J. FORD, PH.D.**

Vice President, Education Leadership Services

[darryl.ford@carneysandoe.com](mailto:darryl.ford@carneysandoe.com)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES