



LOWER SCHOOL HEAD

Start Date: July 2027

Holton-Arms School

Bethesda, Maryland | holton-arms.edu



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit.”

At a Glance



1901
established



3-12
grades



665 total enrollment
172 Lower School enrollment



47%
students of color



33
faculty in the Lower School



72%
faculty with
advanced degrees

Academic Consortia: [INDEX](#), [One Schoolhouse](#), [GEBG](#), [AIMS](#), [ICGS](#)



OVERVIEW

Founded more than a century ago, Holton-Arms School encourages young women in grades 3-12 to approach the world with a thirst for challenge, unflinching curiosity, and a sense of responsibility to use what they learn for the greatest good. A nationally recognized school that prioritizes purposeful connections, Holton is a vibrant place where both students and faculty are deeply engaged in the process of learning and bring tremendous spirit and passion to their work. With a 125-year legacy of excellence in educating girls, Holton provides students with time-tested and future-forward programming, preparing them not only to step into the future but to shape it.

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the "education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit." Founded in 1901 by two visionary women, the School's aspirations and current program are rooted in Mrs. Holton's founding vision, which continues to serve as Holton's North Star: "My high hope is that they who enter through the 'Open Door' of Holton-Arms remember they felt, in the friendliness of a home, the urge to learn and the joy of overcoming obstacles as the way to happiness and the fullest life." In this vibrant community committed to academic excellence, discovery, creativity, and joy, students are scholars, artists, and athletes who find their voices, take risks, learn from mistakes, pursue opportunities for leadership, and build lifelong friendships. The School motto, *Inveniam viam aut faciam* (I will find a way or make one), exemplifies this spirit of agency and empowerment.

The Lower School is where Holton-Arms' Portrait of a Graduate first takes intentional shape. Guided by the School's core values of integrity, community, courage, creativity and kindness, the Lower School experience cultivates girls who are creators, grapplers, learners, and thinkers; ethical and grounded; and leaders in their communities. These aspirations serve as both a common vision and a practical lens for the work of the division, informing curriculum and pedagogy, relationships and community life, student support, and the ways adults model learning and leadership. The Lower School also prioritizes establishing an early mindset wherein the youngest girls see themselves as belonging to something greater than themselves and responsible for carrying on that sense of community. The combination of care of self and others is understood within the division and School as a core ethos to the Holton-Arms legacy.





Holton-Arms lives out its mission through a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to supporting each student and ensuring that all students thrive in school and in life, growing into leaders who will make the world a better place. Inspired by accomplished alumnae, caring faculty and staff, and each other, Holton students step up to challenges, try often, fail gracefully, and succeed proudly. The School's commitment to belonging is grounded in the mission to cultivate the unique potential of young women through an education of mind, soul, and spirit and strengthened by Holton's values of integrity, community, courage, creativity, and kindness.

The Lower School serves as the foundational experience for Holton students to begin their journey. Supported by a sense of safety, deep connection to their teachers, and respectful friendships with classmates, Lower School girls spend their days in an environment of joyful learning, in which agency is cultivated and self-actualization is evident. The culture of encouraging girls to try new things and take risks leads to both early wins and a few stumbles and builds the students' resilience and confidence in navigating learning throughout their lives.

To continue to lead the way, Holton-Arms School seeks a Head of Lower School to oversee a division serving students in Grades 3-6. The next leader will provide strong leadership in support of Holton's academic program, pedagogical philosophy, and strategic vision, using the School's core values and Portrait of a Graduate as a shared compass for the division. Ideal candidates will demonstrate deep knowledge of the developmental needs of children in this age group, the needs of their caregivers, and familiarity with evolving best practices in elementary pedagogy. The Lower School Head reports to the Associate Head of School, Barbara Eghan, and works closely with Holton's Head of School, Penny Evins, as well as the Middle and Upper School Heads, ensuring that there is a "one school" mindset even as the divisions maintain age-appropriate approaches to implementing the School mission. While recognizing that "more is not necessarily better," the Lower School Head will bring creative and strategic ideas that are aligned with the academic and programmatic excellence of the Lower School and will serve as an integral member of the senior administrative team, whose members partner collaboratively, joyfully, and productively.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The priorities, opportunities, and challenges ahead include:

- Serving as an inspirational and creative leader who cultivates habits of excellence among faculty and encourages thoughtful and effective educational innovation and collaborative change;
- In partnership with the senior administrative team, shepherding the Lower School dimensions of the recently-published Strategic Plan, with priorities that include investing in and supporting the growth of faculty and staff; tending to the daily pace and support structures that support student thriving; developing deep and durable learning spaces in support of academic excellence; and leveraging the extraordinary network of alumnae and parents who are excited to open the doors of opportunity;





- Serving as a lead partner with the admissions office in its strategic enrollment work;
- Building upon the Lower School's strong foundation and joyful culture while further empowering faculty and staff, fostering trust, integrity, accountability, professional growth, purposeful collaboration, and shared leadership;
- Deftly managing the pace of change, fully exploring and communicating the purpose and ripple effects of changes;
- Partnering effectively and compassionately with parents and caregivers, including through parent education and transparent communication, building shared understanding of Holton-Arms' educational philosophy and the qualities of intellect, character, agency, and purpose the School seeks to cultivate in girls;
- Collaborating closely with leadership of the Brown House, which provides on-site early childhood care for the children of faculty at five area schools, to offer best-in-class care that is fully consistent with the Holton-Arms mission and philosophy; and
- Building community, connection, kindness, and a spirit of joy between and among students, faculty, and parents, both within the Lower School and across divisions.



\$4.9M

financial aid
awarded



21%

students receiving
aid



\$63.3M

endowment



57 acres

campus size



Students reside in:
Maryland: 65%
DC: 21%
Virginia: 14%

Motto: *Inveniam viam aut faciam*
(I will find a way or make one)

QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The next Lower School Head will be an experienced, empathetic, and forward-thinking educator who brings both heart and vision to their work. Ideal candidates will demonstrate the following qualities and professional competencies:



Professional Qualifications

- An experienced educator and visionary leader with teaching and leadership experience in a Lower School setting, along with a deep understanding of child development and appreciation for the opportunities of a multi-division school for girls;
- A demonstrated ability to translate mission and educational vision into the daily life of a school, using shared values and student outcomes to guide program, pedagogy, culture, decision-making, and adult practice;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy, the tactical skills to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy, and the organizational fluency to manage multiple streams of information and respond to situations as they emerge;
- Strong evidence of a professional commitment to building and nurturing an inclusive community, wherein belonging is advanced and fostered;
- A successful record of recruiting, developing, evaluating, and retaining exceptional faculty and staff, while fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement;
- Exceptional communication, listening, and relationship-building skills, coupled with the ability to build trust with and partner effectively with students, families, faculty, and colleagues across the institution.



Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- An approachable, engaged, authentic presence who is excited to be visible amidst the busy rhythms of school life;
- An ease with engaging with students, teachers and parents alike, modeling the building of strong relationships as crucial to creating a happy and thriving learning community;
- A strategic thinker and creative problem solver who can balance innovation with thoughtful implementation and change management;
- The curiosity, integrity, emotional intelligence, humility, and self-awareness to know what one stands for, understand the impact of one's choices on others, advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and engage in challenging conversations with grace;
- The confidence to make difficult decisions while remaining open to ongoing feedback and revision;
- An exceptional work ethic and action bias, alongside a commitment to community care;
- The ability to prioritize, execute, ideate, and lead as a model of Holton's values; and
- A love of children, joyful spirit, sense of humor, and infectious enthusiasm for Lower School.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [School History](#)
- [The Girls Advantage](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)
- [School Profile](#)
- [Strategic Plan](#)
- [Head of School](#)
- [About Bethesda, Maryland](#)





TO APPLY

Confidential review of candidate materials will begin immediately. Interested candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

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

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

- Writing samples specific to this search
- 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)

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a résumé and cover letter as soon as possible to:

HEATHER FLEWELLING

Senior Consultant

Heather.flewelling@carneysandoe.com

MARSHA LITTLE

Senior Consultant,

Vice President of Professional Learning and Strategy

marsha.little@carneysandoe.com

The full-time salary range for this position is \$165K-\$180K. The children of employees receive 50% tuition remission at Holton-Arms and Landon. 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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