



CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

Start Date: July 2027

Episcopal High School

Alexandria, Virginia | episcopalhighschool.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by its founding principles of honor, academic distinction, spiritual growth, and community. Episcopal High School prepares young people with the intellectual and moral courage to pursue lives of ethical leadership and service as citizens of an increasingly connected world.

At a Glance



1839
established



440
total enrollment



40%
students of color



96
total full-time faculty



83%
faculty with
advanced degrees



5:1
student-faculty ratio



OVERVIEW

Episcopal High School is one of the nation's most distinguished independent boarding schools, offering an exceptional educational experience grounded in academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, personal growth, and a profound commitment to character and community. Located on a 130-acre campus in Alexandria, Virginia, minutes from Washington, D.C., Episcopal combines the intimacy and enduring relationships of a fully residential school with extraordinary access to the educational, cultural, and civic resources of the nation's capital. With all students and 90 percent of faculty living on campus, its distinctive boarding model creates a community in which students and faculty learn and grow together, forging connections that extend well beyond the classroom. Known affectionately as "The High School," Episcopal is a place where young people are challenged to discover their passions, embrace new experiences, and develop the confidence, compassion, and courage to make a difference in the world.

Guided by its founding principles of honor, academic distinction, spiritual growth, and community, Episcopal prepares students to lead lives of ethical leadership and service. Its rigorous academic program is enriched by exceptional opportunities in athletics, the arts, experiential learning, and engagement with the wider world. The School's proximity to Washington, D.C., transforms the nation's capital into an extension of the classroom, connecting students with leaders, institutions, and experiences that bring learning to life. At the heart of the Episcopal experience is a belief in the power of relationships and the importance of knowing, valuing, and supporting each student. The result is a close-knit, joyful, and intellectually ambitious community that encourages students to think independently, act with integrity, and develop both the intellectual and moral courage to lead purposeful lives.



Founded in 1839 by the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia under the leadership of Bishop William Meade, Episcopal opened with just 35 students on a campus overlooking Alexandria. From its earliest days, the School combined a rigorous classical education with spiritual formation and a commitment to the development of character. Over nearly two centuries, Episcopal has navigated profound historical and societal changes while remaining faithful to its founding ideals. Closed during the Civil War, when its buildings were used as a Union Army hospital, the School reopened in 1866 and subsequently grew in both enrollment and reputation. Generations of dedicated school leaders and faculty shaped its academic program, traditions, and campus, establishing the distinctive educational community that thrives today.



Episcopal's history is also one of thoughtful evolution. The School welcomed its first African American students in 1968 and began its transition to coeducation in 1991, graduating its first coeducational class in 1993. Today, Episcopal enrolls approximately 440 students from across the United States and around the world, with girls and boys represented in equal numbers. Its traditions, including one of the nation's oldest school honor codes, remain central to the life of the community, even as the School continues to examine its history and respond to the opportunities and responsibilities of a changing world. As Episcopal approaches its 200th anniversary in 2039, it does so with deep pride in its heritage, confidence in its mission, and an ambitious vision for the generations of students who will follow.

Episcopal High School stands at an important moment in its distinguished history. With the successful completion of Courage: The Campaign for Episcopal, which raised a record-breaking \$157 million, the School is building upon extraordinary philanthropic momentum as it looks toward its 200th anniversary and the opportunities that await in its third century. Robust annual giving and a bridge initiative to raise funds for important infrastructure projects will lay the groundwork for the School's next major campaign. With the steady, visionary leadership of Head of School Charley Stillwell, full enrollment, an endowment of approximately \$425 million, and a deeply loyal alumni community, Episcopal approaches this next chapter from a position of exceptional institutional strength.

Episcopal now seeks a seasoned, strategic, and highly relational leader to serve as its next Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). Reporting to the Head of School and working closely with the Board of Trustees and senior leadership team, the CAO will lead a sophisticated, well-resourced advancement operation and a talented team of 20 professionals. The successful candidate will inherit a highly functioning program, a culture of collaboration and mutual respect, and a community that takes great pride in the School's traditions and accomplishments. This is a compelling opportunity for an ambitious and mission-inspired advancement professional to build upon an established record of success, deepen philanthropic engagement, and help shape the next era in Episcopal's history. The School seeks a leader who combines strategic vision and fundraising sophistication with the warmth, humility, and enthusiasm to become a fully engaged member of its distinctive boarding school community.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Chief Advancement Officer will join Episcopal at a particularly exciting moment, inheriting a strong advancement program with the resources, institutional support, and philanthropic momentum to achieve even greater success. The completion of the \$157 million Courage campaign has demonstrated both the generosity of the Episcopal community and the School's ability to articulate and realize ambitious institutional goals. With the 200th anniversary approaching, a new strategic plan on the horizon, and the next comprehensive campaign beginning to take shape, the incoming CAO will have an exceptional opportunity to help define the School's philanthropic future. An immediate priority will be an effort to secure \$20–30 million for important campus infrastructure and capital improvements. Successfully communicating the importance of these investments, while preparing the groundwork for the next campaign, will require creativity, strategic discipline, and a sophisticated approach to donor engagement.





\$9.9M
financial aid
awarded



35%
students receiving
aid



\$425.5M
endowment
(current market value)



\$47.3M
annual operating
budget



130 acres
campus size

While Episcopal's advancement program has achieved impressive results, significant opportunities remain to broaden and deepen philanthropic participation. Roll Call, the school's annual giving program, which currently generates approximately \$4 million, has room to grow relative to comparable institutions, and the recent appointment of a new Director of Annual Giving provides an opportunity for renewed focus and innovation. Planned Giving has enjoyed meaningful success and offers considerable potential for expansion. Equally important will be the cultivation of a new generation of major and principal gift donors as commitments to the recently completed campaign are fulfilled. The next CAO will be expected to maintain an active portfolio of leadership prospects, work closely with the Head of School and trustees in cultivating transformational support, and bring a disciplined, data-informed approach to building the School's long-term philanthropic pipeline.

The successful candidate will inherit a talented, experienced, and deeply committed advancement team. Colleagues describe an office characterized by strong morale, mutual respect, collaboration, and a shared commitment to excellence. Recent appointments have added new energy and expertise, while longstanding staff members bring invaluable institutional knowledge and relationships. A well-established leadership structure, with a Director of Development overseeing day-to-day operations, allows the CAO to concentrate on institutional strategy, principal gifts, Board engagement, and the School's most consequential philanthropic priorities. The opportunity will be to preserve the team's distinctive culture while encouraging fresh thinking, strengthening professional development, broadening opportunities for staff leadership, and ensuring that systems, staffing, and resources remain aligned with increasingly ambitious goals.

The transition to new leadership will require particular sensitivity and judgment. The incoming CAO will succeed a highly respected and deeply embedded colleague whose contributions have extended well beyond traditional advancement responsibilities. As a trusted strategic partner to the Head of School, an important liaison to the Board, and a central figure in the life of the institution, the outgoing leader has established key relationships that will require thoughtful attention during the transition. The next CAO will need to establish a strong and independent partnership with the Head of School, earn the confidence of trustees and colleagues, and work collaboratively to clarify priorities and expectations for the role. Episcopal seeks a leader who will bring both the confidence to exercise independent judgment and the humility to listen carefully, learn the culture, and build trust across the School's constituencies.



Episcopal's proud traditions and deeply rooted sense of identity are among its greatest assets. At the same time, the School recognizes the importance of embracing new ideas and approaches as it prepares for its third century. The next CAO will be encouraged to bring fresh perspectives to advancement strategy, constituent engagement, events, communications, and resource allocation, balancing thoughtful innovation with respect for the institution's history and values. An important priority will be strengthening connections between advancement and the broader life of the School, including faculty, students, Admissions, and other administrative departments. The successful candidate will be a visible and enthusiastic presence on campus, understanding that the most compelling case for philanthropy begins with authentic engagement in the educational experience and community that donors are being invited to support.

The position also calls for a leader who embraces the demands and rewards of boarding school life. A substantial calendar of regional events, significant donor travel, and engagement with alumni and families across the country and internationally require energy, flexibility, and a genuine enjoyment of relationship building. Working with a sophisticated and engaged Board, the CAO must combine ambitious fundraising goals with sound financial judgment, clear accountability, and persuasive communication. Above all, Episcopal seeks a leader who will recognize the remarkable foundation already in place while inspiring the community to reach even higher. For an advancement professional who thrives at the intersection of strategy, philanthropy, institutional leadership, and personal relationships, this is an exceptional opportunity to help guide one of the nation's most distinguished boarding schools into its third century.

QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES



Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.
- A minimum of ten years of significant, progressively responsible advancement leadership experience, including senior-level responsibility within a sophisticated, successful fundraising program. Experience in a boarding school environment, or a strong understanding of its distinctive culture and demands, is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated success in cultivating, soliciting, and securing major and principal gifts, including experience serving as a lead solicitor and partnering effectively with institutional leadership on transformational gifts.
- Substantial capital or comprehensive campaign leadership experience, ideally encompassing campaign planning, execution, and successful completion, with the strategic vision to prepare Episcopal for its next major campaign.
- Proven ability to strengthen annual and planned giving programs, expand donor participation, and build sustainable pipelines of philanthropic support.
- Experience working closely with a Head of School or comparable institutional leader and a sophisticated Board of Trustees, including supporting governance, committee work, and volunteer leadership.
- Strong financial and analytical skills, including experience developing budgets, establishing ambitious but realistic fundraising goals, evaluating performance, and presenting complex financial and capital priorities persuasively.
- Demonstrated success leading, mentoring, and developing a substantial advancement team, including supervising senior professionals and fostering accountability, collaboration, and professional growth.
- Thorough understanding of contemporary advancement practices, including prospect research, portfolio management, moves management, donor stewardship, and the strategic use of data and analytics.
- Familiarity with advancement technology and information systems, with experience using Raiser's Edge or comparable fundraising databases considered an advantage.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to articulate a compelling institutional vision and collaborate effectively with colleagues in communications, admissions, and other areas of school leadership.
- Willingness and ability to travel regularly for donor cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, and regional events, and to participate actively in the life of a residential school community.



Personal Attributes

- **Strategic and visionary:** An accomplished institutional thinker who can engage confidently with the Head of School, trustees, and senior colleagues in shaping long-term priorities and translating aspirations into actionable plans.
- **Confident and self-directed:** A decisive leader who brings initiative, sound judgment, and the ability to establish clear direction, exercise appropriate independence, and take responsibility for results.
- **Ambitious yet thoughtful:** An innovative and forward-looking professional who respects Episcopal's traditions and institutional identity while introducing new ideas, encouraging creativity, and embracing appropriate risk.
- **Collaborative and empowering:** A leader who builds trust, delegates effectively, values the contributions of colleagues at every level, and fosters a culture of shared purpose and accountability.
- **Emotionally intelligent and relational:** A perceptive and engaging individual with the ability to understand motivations, navigate complex relationships, and connect authentically with donors, alumni, trustees, colleagues, and families.
- **Skilled in communication:** A polished, persuasive, and articulate ambassador who is equally comfortable engaging sophisticated donors and trustees, communicating transparently with staff, and participating in the everyday life of the School.
- **Enthusiastic about boarding school life:** A visible and energetic presence who genuinely enjoys young people, values the educational mission, and welcomes opportunities to engage with students, faculty, and the broader residential community.
- **Respectful and inclusive:** A person of integrity and openness who appreciates differing perspectives and builds meaningful relationships across a politically, culturally, and generationally diverse community of students, families, alumni, trustees, faculty, donors, and community partners.
- **Warm, humble, and gracious:** A leader whose kindness, good humor, approachability, and genuine interest in others are matched by high expectations and a commitment to excellence.
- **Invested in mentorship and developing talent:** A thoughtful manager who invests in the professional growth of colleagues, recognizes and cultivates individual strengths, and creates opportunities for staff members to assume greater responsibility and leadership.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [Portrait of a Graduate & Core Beliefs](#)
- [Community & Equity](#)
- [College Matriculation](#)
- [About Alexandria, Virginia](#)





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:

SARA SHULMAN

Practice Leader – Development and Finance/Senior Consultant
sara.shulman@carneysandoe.com

MYLES AMEND

Senior Consultant
myles.amend@carneysandoe.com

The full-time salary range for this position is \$275,000-\$315,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, education background, and expertise. Benefits include a home on campus and full tuition remission for qualified high school age children.



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