

Sheridan
SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL HEAD

Start Date: July 2027

Sheridan School

Washington, DC | sheridanschool.org

Carney Sandoe & Associates

MISSION STATEMENT

Sheridan School's mission is to create an inclusive, vibrant learning community. We take joy in learning, show kindness and empathy towards others, embrace new experiences and ideas, and continually seek a deeper and fuller understanding of the world. We seek to inspire self-knowledge, intellectual discipline, and personal integrity in our community members. At both our city and mountain campuses, the Sheridan community challenges itself to live the ideal of respect for oneself, others, and the environment.

At a Glance

1927
established

207
total enrollment

37.8%
students of color

34
total faculty

60-65%
faculty with advanced degrees

7:1
student-faculty ratio



OVERVIEW

Located in Washington, D.C.'s vibrant Cleveland Park neighborhood, the Sheridan School is a progressive, K-8 community known for joyful learning, close relationships, and a longstanding commitment to social justice. With an intentionally small enrollment, students learn in a setting where they are known well, encouraged to think independently, and supported in becoming confident, empathetic, and engaged citizens. An additional 130-acre "Mountain Campus" in the Shenandoah Mountains allows students a unique and extraordinary opportunity for experiential learning, outdoor education, and community building that sets Sheridan apart in the D.C. area.

In a carefully curated age-specific program, students are supported through a deliberate developmental arc, with fifth grade serving as a bridge into increasingly departmentalized learning, with the sixth through eighth grades bringing greater independence, responsibility, and academic challenge. Walking the halls of Sheridan, there is a palpable sense of warmth and good cheer, with multiple points of connection with caring adults contributing to a dynamic energy within the building.

The next Head of Middle School will inherit a division with strong relationships, devoted educators, a compelling progressive mission, successful high school placement, and meaningful room to make a difference informed by a recently minted Strategic Plan. The leader will be responsible for the daily life and operations of the division while partnering closely with the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Lower School Head, student support team, admissions colleagues, and faculty. Central to the role will be the ability to connect vision to execution, support excellent teaching, communicate with clarity, and keep this special phase of a young person's life at the center of every decision.



THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND ITS NEEDS

Sheridan's Middle School is valued as a distinct developmental environment and experience, not simply as a necessary bridge between Lower School and Upper School. The community is seeking a leader who genuinely delights in this age group, understands their academic and social-emotional development, and is visible in classrooms, hallways, performances, athletics, trips, and the everyday moments that shape middle school culture. The successful candidate will bring warmth, humor, steadiness, and a professional presence that instills trust with students, faculty, and parents.

The division is poised to move from a period of significant program development toward greater coherence, consistent implementation, and evidence of impact. Recent work in mathematics, learning support, and program design has created momentum, and the next leader will help faculty clarify essential outcomes, strengthen curricular alignment across grades and divisions, and establish dependable systems for reviewing curriculum, data, assessment, and student progress. Opportunities include strengthening foundational skills, differentiating instruction for a broad range of learners, and scheduling time for support, reflection, and deliberate challenge.





Trust in the program is high: current families value the joy, inquiry, problem-solving, and social-emotional learning that Sheridan offers. There is also an appetite in the larger parent/guardian community and prospective families for a more explicit articulation of how Sheridan's progressive approach to teaching and learning prepares students for the next step in their academic journey, particularly in more traditional and "rigorous" high schools. The Middle School Head will help make learning visible through clear goals, consistent assessment practices, useful feedback, and parent communication that explains both what students are learning and why Sheridan's methods work.

Experiential education is one of Sheridan's greatest assets and a clear opportunity. The Mountain Campus, "minimesters," field trips, student leadership roles, and other signature experiences already create powerful memories and relationships. In alignment with the strategic plan, the next leader will strengthen the academic purpose of these experiences at both the urban and mountain campuses, connect them more deliberately to classroom learning, and help identify signature milestone opportunities that build confidence, resilience, collaboration, independence, and leadership.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As Middle School enrollment and student needs have grown, faculty have asked for a leader who can support adults in setting priorities and clarifying roles and will hold people accountable with consistency and care. The MS Head will need to protect teacher bandwidth, while strengthening collaboration across departments and divisions, giving meaningful instructional feedback, and helping faculty translate individual expertise and agency into shared goals. This work includes sustaining a culture of belonging, supporting neurodiverse learners, aligning Responsive Classroom and behavior practices, and ensuring discipline includes clear expectations, follow-through, and opportunities for students to learn from mistakes.

Finally, the Middle School Head will be an important partner in enrollment and retention. In the competitive Washington, D.C., market, the leader must understand the motivations and experience of prospective and current families, speak compellingly about the value of a progressive K-8 education, and communicate Sheridan's identity with confidence. Strong high school placement remains important, but Sheridan is also seeking better ways to show how graduates thrive academically, socially, and as leaders after they leave the school.



Strategic Priorities for the Next Middle School Head

- To sustain a joyful, inclusive, and vibrant student culture while establishing clear, developmentally appropriate expectations and responses to student behavior.
- To champion the stand-alone aspects of the MS while working collaboratively with the LS to enhance curricular continuity and communicate a “whole-school” perspective.
- To build systems that support the full spectrum of learners – with enhancement of challenge as well as robust intervention to meet the range of neurodiversity.
- To expand experiential learning school-wide and enhance intentional connections between the Mountain Campus and City Campus programs.
- To lead and “grow” faculty through partnership, instructional feedback, professional growth, transparent priorities, and accountable follow-through.
- To communicate consistently to help families understand student progress, the program, and the value of Sheridan’s approach.
- To partner child-centered learning with clear messaging about academic expectations, evidence, and outcome and s to articulate the Middle School “value proposition” and engage with initiatives to strengthen enrollment, retention, and external visibility.
- To guide thoughtful, age-appropriate approaches to technology and AI that deepen learning, without displacing attention, human connection, or hands-on experience.



$1.7M
financial aid awarded

17.8%
students receiving aid

1.6 acres
DC campus size

QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES



The most competitive candidates will offer most or all the following qualifications and qualities:

Professional qualities and experience

- A deep appreciation for middle-schoolers and substantial experience teaching and leading in middle school settings.
- A deep understanding, and champion off progressive education, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and social-emotional learning.
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging, including the capacity to facilitate complex conversations and build inclusive curriculum and culture.
- Experience connecting experiential education to academic goals and student development.
- Experience supporting a wide range of learners and strengthening differentiation, learning support, and academic challenge.
- An understanding of standards-based evaluation.
- The ability to observe teaching, provide actionable feedback, and lead adults through collaboration, clarity, and accountability.
- Strong operational judgment and the ability to translate vision into priorities, systems, schedules, and sustained implementation.
- The ability to partner effectively with parents and to communicate the value of the program to current and prospective families.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- A warm, approachable, responsive persona, with the humor and humility to enjoy the daily life of a middle school.
- A clear and transparent communication style with excellent follow-through.
- A student-centered decision maker who understands that connection precedes correction while maintaining clear expectations.
- The ability to meet the students where they are in their playful irreverence and passion for fairness.
- A motivated, energetic, and collaborative colleague who takes joy in team success.
- A commitment to hard work and creative problem-solving which brings ideas to action
- Collaborative leader who empowers others, invites disparate points of view and delegates to people's strengths.
- An eagerness to learn, and the confidence to say, "I do not know yet, but we will figure it out."
- An eagerness to jump in and be part of the fullness and spirit of the Sheridan School community.

LEARN MORE

- School Website
- Community at Sheridan
- Mountain Campus
- High School Placement
- About Washington, DC





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 their interest in and alignment with this position
- A current and comprehensive résumé which highlights relevant experience

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

DAN MILLER
Senior Consultant
dan.miller@carneysandoe.com

The full-time salary range for this position is $135,000-$150,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, education background, and expertise.

Carney Sandoe & ASSOCIATES