

POSITION STATEMENT

Hackley School

Tarrytown, New York



LEADERSHIP SEARCH

Upper School Director

Start Date: July 1, 2027



A Leadership Search conducted by **RG175 Search Consultant Adam Peichert**

Overview

Perched high above the Hudson Valley communities of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow, Hackley School occupies a historic and expansive 285-acre campus that feels both impressive and remarkably personal. There is a warm, almost familial energy to the Hilltop, where buildings that once housed the School's founder sit comfortably alongside modern facilities for academics, arts, athletics, and wellness. Wooded trails, playing fields, gathering spaces, and a significant residential faculty presence further contribute to a campus where school life extends well beyond the classroom and relationships develop naturally across settings.

That sense of connection is central to the Upper School experience. Hackley offers a strong academic program, and its definition of excellence extends beyond achievement: students are expected to grow in character, scholarship, and accomplishment while learning to contribute meaningfully to their community. Talented faculty know students as teachers, advisors, coaches, and mentors, and the Upper School combines rigorous academics with robust opportunities in the arts, athletics, service, global education, independent research, and residential life. The result is a high-achieving community that remains notably warm, grounded, and relational.

The next Upper School Director will join Hackley at an exciting moment of both continuity and evolution. After nearly two decades leading the division, Andy King will move into a new role as Assistant Head of School, allowing the next Director to inherit an Upper School with tremendous strengths while helping shape its next chapter alongside a talented leadership team. With important academic transitions already underway—including the move beyond AP courses and toward a semester-based calendar—the opportunity is not one of reinvention, but of thoughtful evolution: preserving the relationships, rigor, character, and sense of community that Hackley families value while bringing fresh perspective to how the Upper School can best serve the next generation of students.





Who is Hackley School?

Hackley's mission and core values are deeply woven into the daily life of the School, shaping how students learn, how adults lead, and how members of the community engage with one another. The emphasis on friendship, mutual support, character, and purpose creates a culture in which relationships matter and students are expected to contribute meaningfully to the life of the community. That sense of connection is reinforced across classrooms, advisory, athletics, the arts, service, and residential life, helping students feel both known and responsible for something larger than themselves. Hackley's commitment to learning from varying perspectives further strengthens a culture of belonging, encouraging openness, curiosity, and respect across differences. The result is a community that is ambitious and high achieving, but also notably warm, grounded, and relational.

Mission

Hackley challenges students to grow in character, scholarship, and accomplishment, to offer unreserved effort, and to learn from the varying perspectives and backgrounds in our community and the world.

Values

- Enter Here to Be and Find a Friend
- United, We Help One Another
- Character is Higher than Intellect
- Go Forth and Spread Beauty and Light

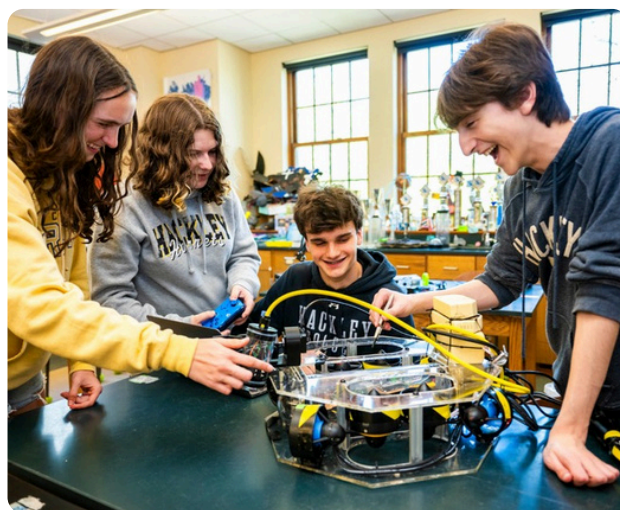
To learn more about Hackley's History and Culture, read here:

<https://www.hackleyschool.org/our-school/mission-core-values-history>

The Hilltop and The Hudson Valley Community

Hackley's 285-acre campus, affectionately known as the Hilltop, offers a remarkable setting overlooking the Hudson River in Tarrytown, approximately 20 miles north of New York City. More than 200 acres of fields, forest, trails, and open space surround the School's academic, arts, athletic, wellness, and residential facilities, creating a campus that feels both expansive and connected and serves as an extension of the educational program. Beyond the Hilltop, Tarrytown and neighboring Hudson River communities such as Sleepy Hollow and Irvington combine historic character, vibrant village centers, restaurants and cultural attractions, and the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley.

New York City is close enough to remain an important cultural and professional resource—Tarrytown is about a 45-minute train ride from Grand Central—while the School's wooded setting and the surrounding river towns provide a meaningful sense of distance from the pace and density of the city. For faculty and school leaders, the area offers an appealing combination: the beauty and quality of life of the lower Hudson Valley with ready access to New York City and the broader metropolitan region.



The Upper School Academic Program

Hackley's Upper School offers a robust, challenging, and rigorous college-preparatory program grounded in a broad liberal arts tradition and designed to inspire intellectual curiosity, independence, and a genuine love of learning. Students engage deeply across disciplines, supported by talented faculty who set high expectations while encouraging exploration, collaboration, and thoughtful risk-taking. As students progress through the Upper School, they assume increasing ownership of their academic journeys, with opportunities to pursue individual interests through an expansive curriculum and distinctive independent research and experiential programs. Throughout, academic ambition is balanced by Hackley's commitment to character, relationships, and the growth of the whole student.



An Academic Program in Transition

Hackley is in the midst of a significant evolution of its Upper School academic program, moving beyond the Advanced Placement curriculum and toward a semester-based schedule that will provide greater flexibility for students and faculty. Moving beyond AP courses will allow teachers to shape advanced offerings with greater freedom and depth, while creating more space for inquiry, meaning, and distinctive learning experiences. The transition to semesters will similarly open new possibilities for electives and student choice while preserving the rigor that defines a Hackley education. This work is already underway, and its continued implementation and refinement will be an important area of leadership for the next Upper School Director.

Learning in Greater Depth: Global Education and Independent Research

Hackley provides students with meaningful opportunities to extend their learning beyond the traditional classroom and pursue subjects and experiences in greater depth. Through Global Education—including the Casten Trip Program, language immersion, Round Square, exchanges, and international partnerships—students engage directly with different cultures and perspectives while developing curiosity, empathy, and a broader understanding of the world. Hackley's Independent Research Programs offer a different kind of deep dive, allowing motivated students to pursue sustained inquiry in science, English, and History through advanced research, mentorship, and independent scholarship. Together, these programs reflect a school that values intellectual curiosity and gives students opportunities to take greater ownership of where their interests can lead them.

The Upper School Arts, Athletics And Signature Student Life Programs

Arts

The arts are an integral part of the Hackley experience, providing students with opportunities for creative expression, collaboration, risk-taking, and discovery. Upper School students engage in a rich range of visual and performing arts, including drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, filmmaking, music, theater, and numerous ensembles and performance groups. The 50,000-square-foot Allen Center for the Creative Arts and Technology, opened in 2024, has significantly expanded these opportunities with dedicated studios, digital media spaces, rehearsal rooms, a podcast studio, a black box theater, and the 550-seat Diller Hall. Across the program, the arts are understood not simply as extracurricular pursuits, but as an important part of developing creativity, confidence, character, and connection.

Athletics

Athletics are a central part of the Hackley experience and an important extension of the School's commitment to developing character, leadership, resilience, and community. Approximately 85 percent of Upper School students participate in at least one sport, with many competing across multiple seasons, supported by accomplished coaches—many of whom are also Hackley faculty members—and exceptional facilities across the Hilltop. While Hackley teams have a strong tradition

of competitive success, the program places equal emphasis on teamwork, sportsmanship, perseverance, and the lessons that come from pursuing shared goals. In this way, athletics reflect the broader Hackley culture: students are encouraged to compete with purpose, contribute to something larger than themselves, and grow through both success and challenge.





The Upper School Boarding Program and Residential Life at Hackley

Hackley's distinctive five-day boarding program adds an important residential dimension to a school that is otherwise primarily a day community. Approximately 30 Upper School students live on the Hilltop from Sunday evening through Friday, developing independence while participating fully in the academic and extracurricular life of the School. Just as importantly, approximately 40 percent of Hackley faculty live on campus, creating a residential presence that strengthens relationships and contributes to the unusually connected character of the Hilltop community.

Service and Leadership

Rather than requiring students to complete a prescribed number of service hours, Hackley encourages authentic engagement through community partnerships, service-learning, student-led clubs, peer tutoring, mentoring, and other opportunities. Upper School

students are increasingly empowered to identify causes that matter to them, take initiative, and lead alongside faculty and community partners. In this way, leadership is defined not simply by holding a position, but by developing empathy, responsibility, collaboration, and a sense of purpose.

Hudson Scholars

Hudson Scholars is one of Hackley's most distinctive expressions of its commitment to service, leadership, and connection to the surrounding community. Founded in 2016, the tuition-free enrichment program serves academically promising middle school students from Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow through a four-week summer experience and year-round support, with Hackley Upper School students serving as mentors and role models. For those mentors, the experience provides an unusually meaningful opportunity to develop empathy, responsibility, and leadership while building lasting relationships with younger students. The program has become an important bridge between the Hilltop and its neighboring communities—and another powerful example of Hackley's core value, "United, We Help One Another," in action.

Learn More:

You can read about these aspects of the Upper School, as well as many others that make up Hackley's special program here: <https://www.hackleyschool.org/academic/upper-school-grades-9-12>

The Position

The Director of the Upper School serves as the chief educational and administrative leader for grades 9–12, with broad responsibility for the academic program, student experience, faculty leadership, and daily life of the division. Reporting to the Head of School, the Director leads and supports a talented team of administrators and faculty while working collaboratively with colleagues across Hackley to ensure that the Upper School's priorities remain aligned with the mission and strategic direction of the School. The role requires a leader who can move comfortably between strategic and operational responsibilities—supporting excellent teaching, nurturing a healthy and inclusive student culture, communicating effectively with families, and responding thoughtfully to the many opportunities and challenges that arise in a dynamic Upper School. Above all, the Director must be a highly visible, accessible, and relational presence who knows students and faculty well and embraces the job description's expectation that they serve as the division's "chief problem solver."

Opportunities and Challenges for the Upper School Director

Assist the continued evolution of the Upper School academic program. The next Director will partner closely with the new Assistant Head of School and the Director of Academic Affairs as Hackley moves beyond AP courses and toward a semester-based calendar, helping ensure that the program continues to reflect the rigor, breadth, and student-centered approach that define a Hackley education.

Bring greater coherence and consistency to the student academic experience. As Hackley embraces greater curricular flexibility, there is an opportunity to examine assessment and grading practices, curricular sequencing, and access to electives and experiential learning while preserving the autonomy and creativity that faculty and students value.



Develop a more intentional skill-development curriculum across the four years of Upper School. Building upon existing advisory, health and wellness, and character education efforts, the next Director can help create a thoughtful progression that develops skills such as self-advocacy, executive functioning, decision-making, independence, and responsible engagement with the community.

Clarify and strengthen the structure of the Upper School leadership team. Hackley has talented and experienced deans, administrators, department chairs, and faculty leaders, creating an opportunity for the next Director to delegate more intentionally, develop emerging leaders, and build sustainable systems that distribute both responsibility and expertise.

Preserve Hackley's highly relational culture while establishing appropriate expectations, accountability, and boundaries. Students, families, and faculty value the extraordinary accessibility and

responsiveness of Upper School leadership; the next Director will need to sustain that trust while creating clear channels of communication and empowering others to appropriately resolve questions and concerns.

Strengthen learning support and confidently serve a broader range of learners. Hackley believes deeply that academic excellence and academic support are not mutually exclusive, and the next Director will have an opportunity to help clarify and enhance the structures, resources, and expectations that allow students with different learning needs to thrive.

Help shape the future of the Upper School. The next Director will be tasked with helping lead discussions around the long-term direction of the Upper School's program. These discussions will include how existing programs can continue to grow and evolve, along with envisioning new opportunities for students and faculty alike.



Leadership Qualities of the Upper School Director

- Student-centered, with a deep commitment to academic excellence, wellbeing, character, and ensuring that individual students are known, supported, and appropriately challenged.
 - Humble, authentic, and low-ego, bringing humor, humanity, curiosity, and a spirit of partnership to the work.
 - Warm, approachable, and highly visible, with an appreciation for the energy and curiosity of Upper School students and a desire to be actively engaged in the daily life of the Upper School.
 - An experienced and intellectually curious educator with a deep interest in teaching, learning, curriculum, and adolescent development.
 - A strong relationship builder who earns the trust of students, faculty, and families while understanding the importance of Hackley's highly relational culture.
 - Collaborative and team-oriented, with the ability to delegate effectively, empower talented colleagues, and develop emerging leaders.
 - Confident and decisive, with the judgment and backbone to establish appropriate boundaries, make difficult decisions, and hold people accountable.
 - An excellent and transparent communicator who listens carefully and can clearly articulate the "why" behind decisions, priorities, and educational initiatives.
- Strategic and organizationally minded, with the ability to clarify roles, establish sustainable systems, and balance long-term priorities with the daily demands of a busy Upper School.

Salary

The salary range is approximately \$220,000.00 to \$260,000.00.





Application Process

Candidates interested in applying to be the Upper School Head at Hackley School may apply online at:

www.rg175.com/candidate/register

The application includes:

- Letter of Interest that addresses: Why this opportunity at Hackley and why now?
- Resume
- Personal Statement/Education Philosophy

Applications will be reviewed as they are received this fall. Initial conversations with the consultant from Resource Group 175 will be ongoing, with a plan for the school team to begin interviews in November. We anticipate a hire being made around the end of the calendar year, with the next Upper School Head beginning in July 2027.

You are encouraged to submit materials promptly if interested.

If you have any questions about the search, please contact the consultant, Adam Peichert, from Resource Group 175 who are supporting the search:

adam.peichert@rg175.com

Thank you for your interest in Hackley School. We look forward to hearing more about your interest in this exciting opportunity.