Position Statement
Head of Upper School
Dexter Southfield School
July 1, 2022
Brookline, MA
Dexter Southfield School
Head of Upper School

POSITION STATEMENT | START DATE: JULY 1, 2022

OVERVIEW
Dexter Southfield, an independent college preparatory day school for young men and women in PreK through Class 12, seeks to bring to its community a new Head of Upper School, to start in July of 2022. The Head of Upper School will serve as the leader of Dexter Southfield’s fastest growing division, with over 400 students, and work in close collaboration with upper school administrators and 50+ faculty while reporting to the Assistant Head of School and meeting regularly with the Head of School.

HISTORY
Dexter School for boys opened in 1926, occupying a site in Brookline during the headships of Miss Myra Fiske and the Reverend Francis Caswell. Under Headmaster William Phinney, the School purchased the Newton Street property in 1966 and began the construction of its current campus on the Boston-Brookline line. In 1992, Southfield School was established alongside Dexter on the current site to offer girls the same outstanding education that Dexter boys had long enjoyed, and the two schools operated as coordinated programs under the same administration. In 2003, the Upper School opened, offering an outstanding secondary school option in the Boston area. In 2014 Dexter and Southfield, already one community, officially merged as Dexter Southfield. The Upper School is coed while classes in the Middle School (6-8) and Lower School (PreK-5) remain single sex for boys and girls.

TODAY
Dexter Southfield enrolls 1025 students from more than 60 towns in Greater Boston and sits on a 36-acre campus just five miles from the center of the city. The School features state-of-the-art academic facilities, including the Clay Center for Science and Technology, which houses a research-grade astronomical observatory, a lecture hall and theater, and several labs. In 2020, the School added 23,000 square feet of academic space across the campus to support its growing enrollment. Dexter Southfield has equally impressive athletic facilities, including the Kraft Fieldhouse and Arena with 100,000 square feet of indoor space, the Squash Center, turf fields, and the Rowing Center on the Charles River. Close to Boston’s world-class museums, libraries, hospitals, performing arts venues, colleges, and universities, the School leverages area resources as an extension of its classrooms. With these opportunities, the students, faculty, and staff of Dexter Southfield approach everything they do with enthusiasm, pride, and commitment.
MISSION
Dexter Southfield School helps boys and girls develop their individual talents and build an ethical foundation for life. Students learn to lead with confidence, serve with compassion, and live by the motto, “Our Best Today, Better Tomorrow.”

BACKGROUND
There is no person on site who represents Dexter Southfield’s motto more than Head of School Todd Vincent, who has served the School for over 36 years in almost every capacity on campus. With Mr. Vincent’s leadership, Dexter Southfield is uniquely positioned to maintain a respectful eye on its past, traditions, and core principles while it evolves and innovates to meet the needs of the students of today and tomorrow, and to do so during a period of extraordinary growth. To achieve that balance, Dexter Southfield is committed to promoting a standard of excellence in all areas, including academics, athletics, arts, service, leadership, and character development, and it is focused on adding value for each student and family. With this balance in mind, the School measures its accomplishments by the success and contributions of its students in the classroom, college, career, and community.

UPPER SCHOOL PROGRAM
The Dexter Southfield program is built on a foundation of academic excellence and a curriculum that combines traditional scholarship and exceptional communication skills with proven curricular innovation. The upper school curriculum is especially versatile and shapes its overall program and expectations for excellence around each student’s goals. In addition to a strong base of learning in Classes 9 and 10, the School offers 18 AP courses and several Honors-level electives to provide both rigor and flexibility throughout the four years leading to graduation.
Courses of study are responsive to both students’ interests and the challenges of a changing world. Students master essential skills, gain an appreciation for life-long learning, and become co-creators of their own education. Class 12 students, for example, conclude their academic experience at the School by completing an off-campus independent study project under the guidance of a mentor, taking advantage of the proximity to Boston by pursuing internships, community service, career exploration, science and lab research, and creative pursuits. In each grade students study and engage in formal public speaking with a weekly workshop and annual presentations, guided and coached by faculty instructors. In addition, a new entrepreneurial program encourages students to identify a business, service, or product opportunity and create operational and growth plans.

OPPORTUNITY
The new Head of Upper School will play a key role in leading and supporting Dexter Southfield’s ongoing efforts to realize its vision and aspirations, to strike the balance between tradition and innovation, to anticipate its next chapter of growth and development, and to execute on the School’s strategic priorities. This leader will run a rapidly developing division, one that has successfully built out its platform and seen enrollment grow substantially in recent years. The new Head of Upper School will be tasked with analyzing the success of the educational programs well underway, refining these programs, enhancing instruction by nurturing the talent on site, identifying means to assess student outcomes, and increasing academic options and flexibility for students while raising the Upper School’s academic profile.
SUMMARY

Dexter Southfield’s Head of Upper School position is an ideal opportunity for a school leader to join a dynamic and nimble school committed to serving its students and families well; to join mission-driven, cohesive, and high-performing teams that value tradition, excellence, and innovation; and to join a highly engaged, close-knit community eager to provide the support necessary to assure a new leader’s success. The Head of Upper School will lead a division that is an established competitor in Greater Boston and seeks to build new successes through creative programming and opportunities for students.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE

The Head of Upper School is committed to Dexter Southfield’s mission and responsible for the oversight of the Upper School’s students, faculty, and academic and student life programs and activities. The Head of Upper School must have an inspiring vision for secondary education and must possess the administrative skills and personal qualities necessary to work closely with administrators, faculty, and staff; to maintain clear standards, high expectations, and effective systems for execution; and to form caring relationships with students, parents, and faculty.

If this opportunity sparks your interest, please visit the Dexter Southfield website at https://www.dextersouthfield.org
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to other roles that might be assigned as needed by the Head of School, the primary duties and responsibilities of the Head of Upper School will include but are not limited to the following:

• Lead the Upper School and serve as a trusted member of the Academic & Student Life administrative team, which is led by the Assistant Head of School. Meet with the Assistant Head of School Weekly. Meet with the Head of School Weekly. Regularly collaborate with the Head of Lower School, the Head of Middle School, the Director of College Counseling, the Head of Health Services, the Head of School Counseling, and the Registrar. Frequently collaborate with the

• Oversee all elements of the Upper School’s rigorous, comprehensive, and innovative educational program, including academics, the arts, community service, student life, public speaking, leadership, and character development.

• Lead an upper school administrative team including eight department chairs, two deans of students, and one dean of academics.

• Partner with the Assistant Head of School and the Director of Human Resources to play an essential role in retaining, recruiting, and training outstanding faculty for the Upper School.

• Maintain a collaborative professional environment that promotes outstanding classroom teaching and encourages the use of best practices in instruction.

• Set high expectations and establish clear standards for faculty, and assess their performance against these expectations and standards.

• Support the professional growth of faculty through on-going mentoring, annual reviews, and relevant opportunities for development.

• Tend to the social and emotional health and growth of students by partnering with the Deans of Students, student support team, and Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

• Help establish the Upper School’s annual non-personnel budget of approximately $450,000, and administer it in the best interests of the students.

• Communicate effectively with all internal and external constituents.
CHALLENGES

The next Head of Upper School should be prepared to both lead and collaborate with a dedicated and experienced Head of School and Assistant Head of School, a talented administrative team, and a dedicated faculty and staff. After taking the requisite time to both know and appreciate Dexter Southfield’s people, programs, history, and traditions, the new Head of Upper School will be expected to lead adults and adolescents, meet challenges head on, and identify and seize opportunities that will move the Upper School forward with conviction and success.

These challenges include but are not limited to the following:

• Capitalize on the School’s ambition for its students, its recent growth, its positive momentum, and its plan to continue building out its Upper School program.

• Refine, focus, and enhance the programs in the Upper School, building first upon existing strengths while being mindful of how the division fits into the overall strategy of the School.

• Maintain trusting relationships with students while motivating, inspiring, and setting clear expectations for all of them.

• Serve as teacher of teachers, paying particular attention to faculty growth and development.
• Develop an increasingly innovative curriculum that prepares students for a diverse, global, and interconnected world.

• Provide students with transformational curricular and co-curricular experiences by leveraging the resources of the Boston area and seeking new partnerships to augment the core program.

• Attract student-centered and growth-oriented faculty and develop their talents as teachers and learners capable of making noteworthy contributions to their field.

• Lead the student support team in their efforts to prioritize the health and wellness of motivated students who pursue excellence in a demanding environment.

• Maintain strong professional relationships with parents.

• Advance, in conjunction with other leaders, the School’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES**

The successful candidate to be appointed Head of Upper School will embody and/or demonstrate the following skills, qualities, characteristics, and experiences:

• Engaging and enthusiastic school leadership, with full participation in school life; genuine interest in faculty, students, and parents; and accessibility.
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• An outcome orientation, with an inclination to measure progress and use data to inform decision making.

• Effective listening skills to support professional relationships and inform decision making.

• Awareness of the highly selective college admissions process and familiarity with successful college counseling programs.

• Innovation, creativity, initiative, and willingness to take calculated risks, with a bias toward action to pilot, try, refine, adjust, and implement new programs.

• Artful supervision of faculty and students, with effective feedback based on observation and high standards.

TO APPLY

Candidates interested in applying for the position of Head of Upper School at Dexter Southfield should do so online at https://rg175.com/candidate/signup.

Application includes:

• Letter of interest
• Resume or CV
• Personal Statement
• Names of five current references

For any questions, please contact:

John F. Green
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An outcome orientation, with an inclination to measure progress and use data to inform decision making.

Superb communication skills in writing, in person, and for a variety of purposes and audiences.

An advanced degree, with a commitment to ongoing learning and professional growth.

At least five years’ experience in educational leadership.

A strong work ethic, with the passion and capacity to invest full days.

Integrity, warmth, humility, optimism, curiosity, and a sense of humor.