

# Collegiate School



**Position Statement**

**Head of School**

**Start Date: July 1, 2024**

**Collegiate School**

**Richmond, Virginia**



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### OVERVIEW

Collegiate School in Richmond, Va. is a jewel. The school thoughtfully blends high standards with a strong sense of community. This combination results in students who are not only well prepared for college and beyond but also happy and engaged. Notwithstanding an enrollment of over 1,680, students at Collegiate feel known and valued. The balance of excellence and the relationship-building that fosters community is the “secret sauce” of the school. The Collegiate Board of Trustees seeks a Head of School whose philosophy of education aligns with this combination and will lead the school in its ongoing quest to better fulfill its mission.

The **mission** of Collegiate School is clear, concise, and, most importantly, lived:

*The mission of Collegiate School is to create a diverse and inclusive community of learners committed to a challenging and supportive educational experience that will foster the intellectual, moral, emotional and physical development of each student.*

In fulfilling this mission, Collegiate has managed to avoid the unhealthy student culture one might find at other competitive schools. Teachers speak glowingly about how supportive students are of each other: collaborating on schoolwork, attending their classmates’ performances and developing lifelong friendships. Of particular note are the **Core Values** that support the mission of the school and are posted throughout the campus:

1. *Honor: personal integrity, a devotion to truth, being forthright, responsible and fair;*
2. *Love of Learning: a creative spirit that promotes intellectual and personal growth through exploration, inquiry and openness to change;*
3. *Excellence: a sustained commitment to meeting high standards of character, achievement and personal accountability;*

4. *Respect: a fundamental regard for the dignity and worth of each individual;*
5. *Community: a commitment to responsive and compassionate citizenship and service on campus, in the local community, and in the broader world.*

At Collegiate **character matters**.

The school has a robust **honor code** in the upper school, one that students take seriously and view as a foundation for the healthy culture of the school. The commitment to community beyond the walls of the school is reflected in the **Powell Institute for Responsible Citizenship**, which provides an umbrella of courses and programs for students to learn about the local community, the country and the world, and also fosters a commitment to helping others as a central tenant in making the world a better place. Of note is the fact that the program is integrated across all three divisions. To learn more about the Powell Institute, please visit: [Ignite - Responsible Citizenship Blog](#).



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The engine for this remarkable school is the faculty. Intelligent, skilled, and dedicated, the teachers at Collegiate work hard to promote the growth of students. Just as important, they are models of the core values of the school, striving for excellence and extending themselves to help students realize their potential. The qualities that the Collegiate faculty embody can be seen in the many roles they take on—teaching, coaching, advising, sponsoring clubs, and more. As one veteran teacher remarked, “These are the kinds of people you want your children to be around.” Equally dedicated are the administrators and staff who work behind the scenes to support the teachers and students. They, too, reflect the spirit of collaboration so evident in the culture of the school. Collegiate is ably led by **Interim Head of School Billy Peebles**, a skilled and veteran educator who embodies the values of the school.

Collegiate School’s **history** begins with its founding in 1915 as an all-girls school located in downtown Richmond. The founder and first head Helen Baker, a pillar of the Presbyterian church, envisioned a school that would promote both scholarship and citizenship. Soon after the founding, the school admitted boys in the early grades. In the 1950s the Board of Trustees established Collegiate Country Day School for boys on the outskirts of Richmond. In 1960 the two schools merged and came together on one campus on Mooreland Road. At that time, the school operated as two single sex schools with a co-educational lower school. In the 1980s the upper school became fully co-educational while the middle school remains coordinate and largely committed to separate classes for girls and boys to this day. In addition to the Mooreland campus, which houses all the academic and arts programs as well as some athletic facilities, the Robins campus provides additional dedicated space to serve a thriving athletic program.

Although the school is not affiliated with any religion, Christmas pageants, religious studies and other religious celebrations have become valued traditions at the school. The school states that it “celebrates and embraces individuals of all faiths and beliefs while acknowledging the ethical and moral Christian and Jewish principles upon which Collegiate School was founded.”



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Though steeped in tradition, Collegiate School has a forward-thinking approach to education. Fueled by a hefty professional development fund, teachers pursue graduate studies and attend conferences, both of which spur the development of new programs and methods of teaching. Collegiate's large enrollment allows the school to offer a myriad of extracurricular activities and clubs that satisfy a wide range of student interest. In particular, the Powell Institute for Responsible Citizenship brings in special speakers, advances real-world student learning, and provides numerous opportunities for students to choose their own intellectual journey.

Collegiate School is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees dedicated to the mission of the school. Drawn from alumni, parents, past parents and others, the Board cares deeply about the school. Interviews with trustees reveal a discerning group who love the school and take their governance responsibilities seriously. In particular, the Board recently approved a **new strategic plan** that provides direction for Collegiate over the next several years. ***Creating Bridges*** outlines a broad set of initiatives related to program, people, and place. Central to the programmatic piece of the plan is leveraging and expanding the already-vibrant Powell Institute for Responsible Citizenship in order to diversify the student experience, create more student agency, and establish opportunities for students to delve deeply into an issue or topic of particular interest. In addition, the strategic plan calls for renewed efforts in strengthening a community of diversity and inclusion. Finally, recognizing space limitations, "Creating Bridges" calls for a new master plan that will ultimately lead to the creation of spaces that will serve a rich and varied set of programs.

The **Richmond metropolitan area** has a diverse population of over 1.2 million people. It is the capital of Virginia and home to six Fortune 500 companies. The city boasts a burgeoning arts, entertainment and restaurant scene. Its location provides easy access to Washington, D. C., the beaches and mountains of Virginia and North Carolina, and the numerous sites that reflect this state's rich history.



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### PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

Academic excellence at Collegiate begins with knowing the students well and seeking to maximize each student's potential. A balanced, comprehensive and connected curriculum from JK-12 Grade allows the students to develop the skills, understandings and habits of mind necessary to thrive and lead as scholars, citizens and leaders in today's and tomorrow's world. Outstanding student achievement, superior teaching, college preparatory curriculum and innovative programs and instruction are the foundations upon which high academic expectations and academic excellence are built at Collegiate. The teachers work every day to model ways of thinking that are

both independent and collaborative, and to remind the students that they matter. Together, they enthusiastically pursue goals, yet learn at every grade level to see beyond themselves by serving others, locally and worldwide. Collegiate graduates are expansive and inquisitive thinkers prepared to engage the challenges of a rapidly changing world with proficiency, openness, creativity, confidence, and compassionate leadership.

Collegiate's **portrait of a graduate** includes:

#### Inquisitive Thinker

- Creative
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Independent
- Discerning

#### Responsible Citizen

- Ethical
- Inclusive
- Global
- Empathetic
- Engaged

#### Compassionate Leader

- Mindful
- Adaptable
- Reflective
- Resilient
- Courageous

These traits are built on the foundation of community, respect, excellence, love of learning and honor, and are permeated throughout all programs of the School.

*To learn much more about the people, programs and curriculum at Collegiate School, please explore the school website and linked social media sites at <https://www.collegiate-va.org/>.*



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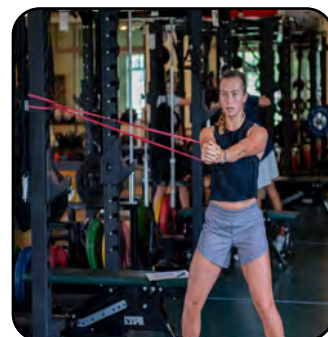
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### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The next Head of School at Collegiate School should be prepared to collaborate with a forward-thinking and devoted school community to fulfill the school's mission and to lead Collegiate wisely into the future by embracing current challenges and exploring new opportunities. These challenges and opportunities include but are not limited to the following:

- Collegiate School is distinguished by the impressive breadth of opportunity and programs available to its students. In addition, the school has explored different directions in emphasis, program and curricula over the last decade. There is a strong sense within both the Board and the extended school community that they would like to see the school assert its identity and direction more clearly and confidently in the years ahead. The next Head of School will need to develop a deep understanding of the school, and then inspire and lead this endeavor.
- Collegiate School has recently completed its strategic plan. The next task will be to prioritize and work out the details of implementation of the strategic plan. While applying their own vision for the future of independent school education and the future of Collegiate, the next Head of School will need to lead a collaborative effort to realize the promise of the strategic plan.
- A major element of the strategic plan is to complete a master planning effort for the entire campus. While Collegiate's facilities are impressive and in overall excellent condition, the reality is that increases in enrollment





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and expansion of the program have placed pressure on those facilities. With an astute eye to addressing current needs, and anticipating future possibilities and requirements, the next Head of School will lead a comprehensive collaborative effort to complete a campus master plan.

- Community matters deeply at Collegiate and it is the quality most frequently identified as special and essential by the school's various constituencies. The next Head of School will need to continue the work to enhance the perception and reality of committed, stable, connected and engaged leadership that promotes a strong sense of

community and a unified sense of purpose guided by the mission and core values of the school.

- Collegiate is a large school with an expansive faculty that rightly values its autonomy and skill in the development of curriculum. Yet over the years the School has lost some of the sense of the connection of the curriculum and program over the entirety of the JK-12 student experience. There is an opportunity for the next Head of School to lead and inspire an effort to build greater clarity and linkage of developmental intent and purpose across the program and curriculum of the school.

- Recent years have seen higher than historical rates of attrition among both faculty and administrators at the school. While some of this turnover is readily explainable and reflects national trends, the rate of it is of concern. The next Head of School will need to study, understand, and develop effective means to address this situation, with support of an effective administrative team and an engaged Board of Trustees.
- Defining and clarifying the school's focus on embracing clear goals for diversity, equity and inclusion will be essential to Collegiate's healthy and successful future.
- A new Head of School will have multiple opportunities to forge the school's future. Loyal and enthusiastic alumni, proud and deeply connected students, an excited and engaged parent body, deeply talented faculty and staff, and sound governance practices means that Collegiate School is solidly positioned to take on challenges and create opportunities for growth and continued success. The next Head of School will be expected to tap and direct productively the school's expansive human and material resources.



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### KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The successful candidate to be Head of School at Collegiate will be a mission and values-driven leader who will embody and demonstrate most, if not all, of the following skills, qualities, characteristics and experiences:

- Demonstrated success as an inspirational educator and leader
- Ability to serve as a visible, energetic, active and engaged presence
- An active listener with a collaborative nature
- Breadth of experience in schools and familiarity with every area of school life
- Experience with building and supporting diverse, equitable and inclusive communities
- Personal integrity, high emotional intelligence, and motivating spirit, along with warmth, energy, enthusiasm and a sense of humor
- Capacity to serve as an ethical and transparent role model for administrators, faculty,



staff and students, and capacity to call on others to be their best selves in a community

- Financial acumen, fundraising experience, an entrepreneurial spirit and a record of thoughtful and data-driven change
- Talent for identifying, selecting, retaining and inspiring outstanding administrators and teachers, as well as for supervising and developing them, building relationships with them and encouraging their professional growth
- Ability to forge authentic relationships with a wide

range of people both within the constituencies of the School and externally, including parents, alumni, faculty and staff and others

- Experience as a strategic thinker, as well as with the development and prioritization of strategic plans
- Strength as a community builder
- Superb oral and written communication skills
- An advanced degree
- Willingness to lead in alignment with the mission, values and future ambitions of the School.



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### TO APPLY

Collegiate School retained the firm Resource Group 175 (RG 175) to support its search for a new Head of School. If you wish to submit your application, please do so at: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>.

Applications include:

- Letter of interest (cover letter)
- Resume or CV
- A Personal, Leadership or Educational Philosophy Statement
- One additional writing sample of your choice (please include in the same pdf as the Philosophy Statement)
- Names of four current references and contact information (optional)

The **deadline** for receipt of full application materials is **Wednesday, March 17, 2023**.

Please note that the Collegiate School Head of School Search Committee intends to interview semi-finalist candidates in-person on a date to be determined in mid-April 2023. Finalists will be invited to visit campus in late April and early May 2023. Please plan accordingly.

For any questions or further information about the position, please contact any of the consultants below:

Bob Henderson  
[rhenderson@rg175.com](mailto:rhenderson@rg175.com)

Tom Olverson  
[tomolverson@gmail.com](mailto:tomolverson@gmail.com)

Marcia Spiller  
[Marcia.spiller@rg175.com](mailto:Marcia.spiller@rg175.com)

### Collegiate School Non-Discrimination Statement

*The School is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all employees and qualified applicants without regard to race, color, gender (including pregnancy), age, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, veteran or military status, marital status, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable law. Employment decisions at the school are based on merit, qualifications, and skills.*