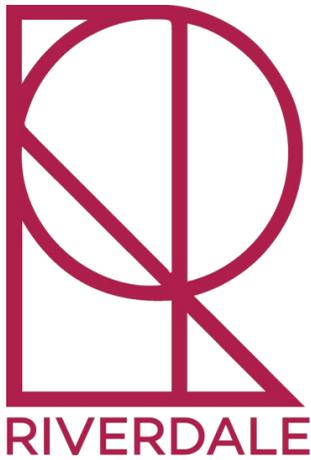


Riverdale Country School

Head of School



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The next Head of Riverdale Country School will be a forward-thinking, empathetic, and student-centered educator who will embrace the school's values and model the mindset of lifelong learning that underpins the community. The next Head will embrace the opportunity to partner with creative, curious faculty who strive to create an environment where academic excellence and student well-being coexist. The next Head will be energized by a school where learning is broadly defined both in and out of the classroom, critical thinking and innovation are valued, the mindset embodies both a local and global lens, and the education strives to spark the curiosity and individual strengths of its students and help them develop the agency to gain a sense of purpose.

The next Head of Riverdale will welcome and encourage generative discussions about key issues facing education and will be keenly interested in how current research will strengthen the school's program. Equally important, the next Head will forge caring, authentic relationships with the adults in the community, have a love and passion for students of all ages, and will welcome the opportunity to be part of a dynamic learning community. The next head will foster an environment of belonging by championing a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

As the academic, administrative, and intellectual leader for Riverdale School, the Head is responsible for delivering on the mission. The Head will be a thoughtful, reflective educator with the confidence to advocate for a vision, the humility to be open to input and ideas, and the willingness to make decisions in the best interests of the school and its students. In collaboration with a talented faculty, staff, leadership team, dedicated board, and extraordinary students, the next Head will have the opportunity to engage the community in charting the school's path forward and catalyze the next phase of the school's evolution.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The next Head of Riverdale will be courageous, engaging, and accomplished, with a demonstrated ability or capacity to:

- Lead in an environment steeped in excellence that values innovative approaches to teaching and learning and that amplifies and enhances successful educational practices, risk-taking, and empowers faculty and staff to reach their full potential and contribute to the overall success of the school.
- Think expansively about the societal and educational trends that will impact Riverdale, and consider how best to prepare students for healthy, productive, and purposeful lives where they will be empowered to transform their ideas into actions.
- Translate research on learning and brain development into compelling programs that seek to challenge students and faculty in their learning and growth.
- Encourage discussion, welcome dissenting opinions, be a generous listener, and have the courage to make decisions always in the best interest of Riverdale.
- Model and support impactful engagement on issues of diversity, inclusion, social justice, equity, and belonging.
- Develop strong, collaborative, authentic relationships with all members of the Riverdale community and the broader educational community.
- Lead and engage in discussions on the future of education and build partnerships with researchers and other thought leaders.
- Be a compelling and clear communicator who engages audiences with content and presence.

- Inspire, mentor, motivate, and support a diverse faculty, staff, and leadership team.
- Foster and inspire a culture of engagement and support from alumni, parents, and guardians.
- Fundraise and cultivate donor relationships to support critical annual giving as well as major projects.
- Effectively collaborate and partner with a strong and experienced board of trustees.
- Engage joyfully with students of all ages.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT HEAD

- Partner with the academic leaders and faculty to advance the curriculum and pedagogy; seek to strengthen the academic excellence.
- Pursue opportunities to nurture the growth of all students and support their families.
- Continue to be a leader in envisioning and exploring innovations in education that will prepare students to be impactful citizens.
- Continue to drive on the dimensions of access and affordability with a focus on making Riverdale more financially accessible and broadening its socio-economic diversity
- Commit to ensuring the Riverdale community continues to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.
- Continue to inculcate the culture of the school with a striving for excellence and continuous improvement.
- In partnership with a strong and committed board, identify and develop the next generation of donors and trustees, ensuring Riverdale has access to the philanthropic support and expertise it needs to thrive.
- Continue to optimize Riverdale’s operating platform – systems, processes, facilities, and organizational structure.
- Ensure that the strength, diversity, and collaborative nature of Riverdale’s leadership team is maintained.
- Set a bold vision and prioritize the steps needed to achieve it.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Educational Leadership

In a school with a strong culture of academic excellence and a clear focus on developing mind, character, and community, the next Head will ensure that Riverdale continues to look forward, understand educational and social trends, and build programs that serve the broad needs of the students. An intellectually curious and open-minded leader, the Head will encourage bold questions, welcome discourse, and support initiatives to continuously evolve the curriculum and overall educational experience of Riverdale students. Backed by research about how students learn and develop, the Head will encourage the discussion of critical questions on learning, consider how to enhance the “high challenge – high support” environment of the school, and support the continued evolution of this dynamic educational community. Recognizing that an excellent faculty is the backbone of every strong school, the Head will invest deeply in the continued professional development of this world-class faculty and support a system of recognition, high expectations, and accountability. A lifelong learner, coalition builder, and lead advocate in the evolution of the school, the Head will relish the opportunity to live, work in, and lead this learning-focused community.

Community Building

At a school focused on developing a strong sense of community, the next Head will demonstrate an abiding commitment to creating a culture and environment that supports the intellectual, physical, and emotional health of its students. An empathetic, caring, and accessible leader, the Head will be visible on campus at important moments in the life of the school as well as at everyday events, building rapport, understanding, and trust. The Head will be the advocate for the extraordinary diversity of the school and ensure that Riverdale continues its intentional, deeply held commitment to being a community where all students, faculty, and staff can be their authentic selves; are seen, heard and valued; and feel a sense of belonging, in order to do their best work.

As an inspiring communicator, the Head will communicate with frequency and transparency, listen with compassion and curiosity, and understand that their daily actions reinforce the community's values.

Organizational Capacity Building

In a high-functioning school where growth and ambitious visions are part of the fabric of the institution, the next Head will be a strategic, adept steward of the school's assets, with strong business acumen and smart fiscal management strategies. The Head will shepherd the school in ways that support the mission and recognize the importance of balancing short-term needs and long-term responsibilities. The next Head will ensure the smooth functioning of the school, including budgets, routine operations, infrastructure, and crisis management. While the Head will encourage discourse and discussion, they will set clear expectations about decision making, have the confidence to make difficult choices, and own their decisions. The Head will understand the value of an exceptional faculty and a strong senior leadership team, and will hire, support, mentor, and empower them. They will understand the importance of aligning ambitions with resources and will continue to cultivate donors and secure gifts that support the school. The Head will be known and appreciated as a clear communicator who conveys the decisions of the school in a consistent and timely way to constituents.

Other Personal Characteristics

- A broadly engaged intellect, reflecting genuine curiosity
- A community, local, and global perspective and interest in societal trends
- Warmth, optimism, positivity, and a keen sense of humor
- Highly self-aware
- Exceptional communication skills and the ability to craft a compelling narrative

SEARCH PROCESS

Riverdale School is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages individuals of all backgrounds and cultures to consider this leadership position. The school's commitment to inclusivity encompasses but is not limited to age, color, creed, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, use of a trained guide dog or service animal by a person with a disability, or genetic information.

The Riverdale School Search Committee is being assisted by Spencer Stuart in this search process. The committee welcomes comments, questions, nominations, or expressions of interest.

To contact the committee, please send an email with any supporting materials to the confidential email address below: RiverdaleHOS@spencerstuart.com

OVERVIEW

Since the founding of the school in 1907, Riverdale has sought to equip its students with the knowledge and capacities, the mindset, to create positive change in our own community and beyond. Generations of the school's alumni are bound by a common pursuit to change the world for the good as our mission reminds us to do. Our students, both at the school and beyond Riverdale, seek to understand the world around them, clarify their thinking, take action, and reflect on what they have learned. Under the leadership of Dominic Randolph, Riverdale Country School has developed an international reputation as an outstanding, independent New York City school. Consistently ranked as a leading Pre-K through Grade 12 school, Riverdale stands in a unique position as a school that is forward-thinking, rigorous, and academically competitive. With 43% students of color and 32% faculty of color, Riverdale reflects a diversity of identities and experiences. The school provides generous opportunities for financial aid at every grade level, for Lower, Middle and Upper School students. There is great momentum at Riverdale – momentum for improvement, for iteration, for new ideas – and the next Head of school will propel and guide that forward motion.

In recent years, Riverdale has attracted interest globally from educators interested in practices such as interdisciplinary and experiential learning, character education, and design-thinking in schools asking fundamental questions about education and its purposes. One question comes to the fore: To what end do we educate our students?

Riverdale's growth and evolution have been supported for over a decade by PLUSSED, our homegrown research and development lab. Nurtured by the Riverdale community and an incredible roster of partners, PLUSSED has evolved into a hub for innovation, capturing and amplifying new insights and translating research into practice – both at Riverdale and beyond. PLUSSED is dedicated to supporting teaching and learning for everyone, in any context, through thought partnership, prototyping and building, and knowledge sharing.

We believe that students should learn and thrive in order to change our world for the good. How does this happen? We create a culture of critical thinking, curiosity, and innovation. We help young people develop character strengths to thrive, find purpose, and grow their ability to transform their ideas into actions. We encourage young people to develop their own particular strengths, and they have the opportunity to do that in the context of a diverse and inclusive community in our school, our city, and our world. We encourage students to learn so that they can find their own agency and develop meaning and purpose in their lives.

Our strategic priorities reflect these commitments:

- Supporting curiosity, learning, and research
- Broadening access to Riverdale and its sustainability
- Fostering innovation, belonging, and thriving
- Refining and focusing our systems and practices

At this moment, there is a strong desire within the Riverdale community to continue to excel in all areas with the direction of a new leader – one who can embrace, model, and celebrate Riverdale’s rich heritage and values while moving the school into areas of practice that meet the new realities and educational challenges of a “post-pandemic” world. The next Head of school will work with the community and the board of trustees to advance Riverdale in every respect – financially, programmatically, and reputationally. They must bring to the position exceptional skills in communication, organizational leadership, systems design, development, crisis management, and movement building, in addition to vision and empathy.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2020, Riverdale completed an ambitious multi-year, \$100 million comprehensive campaign – the most expansive in the school's history. The chief priorities of this effort were to increase the school's financial aid endowment; to improve the physical plant through a range of renovations, most notably the construction of two brand-new facilities, the Upper Learning Building on the River Campus and the Aquatic Center on the Hill Campus; to support academic and co-curricular innovation as well as the professional growth of our faculty and staff; and to secure a robust Annual Fund that would maintain our school's continued fiscal health by providing immediate and flexible support each year. By making this campaign comprehensive and recognizing all gifts to the school during the seven-year period, we were able to ensure that everyone who wished to participate would be counted. As a result, nearly 5,000 donors participated in this campaign with gifts ranging from \$5 to \$5 million.

RIVERDALE AT A GLANCE

Founded:	1907
Number of students:	1273
Pre-K:	16 students
Lower School:	60-66 per grade
Middle School:	85 in 6th grade, about 95 in 7th grade and 8th grade
Upper School:	About 135 per grade
Percentage students of color:	43%
Number of faculty:	287
Percentage faculty of color:	32%
Student/teacher ratio:	7:1
Annual operating budget:	\$72M
Endowment:	65M
Average annual fund:	5M raised each year

* Most recent capital campaign: R+ Campaign – \$100M

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AND RECENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Upper Learning Building on the River Campus – 2016
- Restoration of the Zambetti Athletic Center – full renovation to the main gym, the Montag Varsity Gym, and creation of the Tisch Training Gym – 2017
- Aquatic Center – 2017