

HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

FRIENDS ACADEMY

Locust Valley, New York

friendsacademy.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Guided by our Quaker principles, Friends Academy educates our students to discover and develop the best of who they are and who they can become.

At a Glance



Established
1876



Enrollment
645



Total faculty
92



Student/teacher ratio
7:1



Students of color
47%



Financial aid awarded
\$2.6M



Faculty with
advanced degrees
91%



Campus size
65 acres

Faculty of color: 12%

Students receiving aid: 13.5%

Endowment: \$68.4M

Annual operating budget: \$38.8M



Overview

Friends Academy, a pre-K-12 co-ed day school founded in 1876, has a long and distinguished history and is known as one of New York's finest schools. Offering a first-rate academic program, competitive athletics, and a rich offering of arts, it is also one where the foundation of its Quaker history and principles supports all areas of school life.

Friends Academy is confident in both its identity and mission: a school shaped by and based on Quaker values, set on a beautiful campus, welcoming of people of all backgrounds, staffed by passionate and caring educators, supported by sound financial foundation, sought after in a robust admissions market—and providing a rigorous college preparatory education and matriculating graduates to great universities and colleges. Its mission—"Guided by our Quaker principles, Friends Academy educates our students to discover and develop the best of who they are and who they become"—is lived out every day and on every corner of campus and embraced by all. This is a holistic education, at once intellectual, moral and spiritual; and it is with good reason that many observe, "You can recognize an FA graduate. They are good people."

With Paul Stellato's retirement and the school's 150th birthday on the horizon in 2026, the next Friends Academy Head of School will join the community in a moment marked by extraordinary opportunity. On the foundation of its storied history, and in partnership with a committed Board of Trustees, talented faculty and staff, and ambitious parent body, there is good and important work to be done. For an experienced, inspirational and passionate leader, this is a singularly exciting possibility, a rare moment: a great school, about to celebrate its 150th year, poised to become even greater, blessed by tremendous capacity to fuel substantial investments in the school's future, offering a unique chance to leave a profound and permanent legacy.



Opportunities and Challenges

An appealing mix of ambition and humility enables Friends Academy to recognize its challenges and opportunities—in particular, to elevate the school in reputation, improve its position in the admissions market, strengthen its financial foundation, and foster an inclusive, engaged, and connected culture in its diverse community.

The next leader should expect to

- Continue to build upon the positive momentum of the last several years;
- Communicate an inspiring institutional vision and enhance the school’s reputation and position in a competitive admissions market;
- Lead and manage a complex organization with the aid of a strategically created leadership team;
- Model and affirm Quaker values and traditions in order to foster an inclusive, diverse community;
- Strengthen an already excellent academic program;
- Be a highly connected and engaged presence on campus, at school events and in the community;
- Engage with the Board of Trustees to build on best practices, establish priorities, and implement strategic planning;
- Build relationships with alumni and parents and drive fundraising which will reinforce stronger fiscal architecture and expand investment in people and campus facilities;
- Oversee the school’s annual budget with prudence and discipline, with particular attention to annual expenses; and
- Work closely with faculty to support them in their professional growth.



Desired Qualities and Qualifications

Professional Qualifications

- An experienced, proven and confident leader who has shown the ability to execute strategy and manage all facets of a complex multi-division organization—that is, a strong chief executive.
- A genuine eagerness to embrace Quaker principles as keys to understanding, building and strengthening community and school excellence—that is, a leader who embodies the core values of the school.
- An effective, powerful and persuasive communicator, in speech and print, and someone who can effectively articulate the uniqueness of the Friends Academy experience—that is, an inspiring storyteller.
- A strong understanding of Board governance and best practices—that is, a leader who will engage and inspire the Board.
- A passion for diversity—that is, a steward of culture whose alignment with Quaker values unites a welcoming, inclusive and equitable community that “sees the light” in each member.
- An interest in and capacity for partnering with the Board of Trustees and Chief Financial Officer in prudently managing the school’s finances and enhancing the financial operations—that is, a leader who will be a responsible fiduciary.
- A proven ability to articulate larger vision and strategic priorities combined with the skills to administer and manage needed day-to-day systems and practices—that is, a leader who is comfortable in both “the balcony and the dance floor.”
- The ability to attract, hire, retain and grow talent—that is, a leader who enhances the school’s most valuable resource, its people.
- A passion for teaching and best practices in pedagogy and a deep interest in supporting the growth of faculty—that is, a leader who is fundamentally an educator.
- Proven experience in creating healthy institutional culture—that is, a leader who understands that school mission cannot be accomplished without a culture based on accountability, values, traditions and practices embraced by all.



Leadership Style

Friends Academy seeks a leader who:

- Can foster collaboration, create teams, and find consensus;
- Brings warmth, humility, and trust in all interactions and decision-making;
- Will set high standards, support community members as they seek excellence, and establish transparent ways to ensure accountability;
- Has the ability to understand complex problems and the courage to make the difficult decisions;
- Can effectively create and manage needed change even as they respect and value traditions and history; and
- Can inspire others to embrace and follow a compelling vision.

Personal Qualities

- Goodness. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will model the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, service and stewardship.
- Deep and enthusiastic interest in the day-to-day work of the school and a love of engagement with faculty, staff, students and parents. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will be highly visible and constantly present.
- Strong interpersonal skills and high order emotional intelligence. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will connect easily and develop deep and meaningful relationships with all community members.
- Capacity to foster conversations, guided by the school's Quaker values, among those with disparate views in order to find common ground—and where it cannot be found, to model and create effective listening, respect and acceptance. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will bring empathy, competence and confidence into challenging dialogue.
- Resilience, conviction, empathy, and optimism in the face of challenge and setback. Friends Academy is seeking a leader to whom the community will instinctively turn to during difficult times and find in that person inspiration, consistency and direction.
- Charisma, energy and enthusiasm. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will inspire all community members—second grader and senior, faculty and staff, trustee and graduate, parent and neighbor.
- Commitment. Friends Academy is seeking a leader who will sink deep roots in the school, be eager to lead for the long term, and excited at the prospect of leaving a powerful legacy.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Friends Academy.

[School Website](#)

[Quaker Values](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

[About Locust Valley, New York](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- 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) to:

Mark Davis

Senior Consultant

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Scott Nelson

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William MacMullen

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The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$450,000-\$650,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.