

UPPER SCHOOL HEAD SEARCH

HOLTON-ARMS SCHOOL

Bethesda, Maryland

holton-arms.edu

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit.”

At a Glance



Established
1901



Upper School enrollment
378



US Faculty and Staff
50



Campus size
57 acres



Students of color
46%



Financial aid awarded
\$6M



Faculty with advanced degrees
85%

Grades: 3-12

Total Students: 681

Total Full and Part-time Faculty: 121

Students receiving financial aid: 23%

Endowment Value: \$53M

Motto: *Inveniam viam aut faciam* (I will find a way or make one)

Academic Consortia: [INDEX](#),
[One Schoolhouse](#), [GEBG](#), [AIMS](#),
[ICGSA](#)



Overview

Founded more than a century ago, Holton-Arms School encourages young women in grades 3-12 to approach the world with a thirst for challenge, unflinching curiosity, and a sense of responsibility to use what they learn for the greatest good. A nationally-recognized school that prioritizes purposeful connections, Holton is a vibrant place where both students and faculty are deeply engaged in the process of learning and bring tremendous spirit and passion to their work. With a long legacy of excellence in educating girls, Holton provides students with time-tested and future-forward programming, preparing them for what the world needs next.

The mission of the Holton-Arms School is to cultivate the unique potential of young women through the “education not only of the mind, but of the soul and spirit.” Founded in 1901 by two visionary women, Holton-Arms continues to cultivate a diverse, inclusive, and equitable school community; tend to the health and wellbeing of its members; and build a global curriculum that responds to the learners in its classrooms and the world around us. The school’s aspirations and current program are rooted in Mrs. Holton’s founding vision: “My high hope is that they who enter through the ‘Open Door’ of Holton-Arms remember they felt, in the friendliness of a home, the urge to learn and the joy of overcoming obstacles as the way to happiness and the fullest life.” In this vibrant community committed to academic excellence, discovery, creativity, and joy, students are scholars, artists, and athletes who find their voices, take risks, learn from mistakes, pursue opportunities for leadership, and build lifelong friendships. The school motto, *Inveniam viam aut faciam* (I will find a way or make one), exemplifies this spirit of agency and empowerment. Here, students excel, while as a community, they enthusiastically support the wins and experiences of one another.

Holton-Arms lives out its mission in part through the [*Learn Well, Live Well, Lead Well*](#) (LW3) framework, a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to supporting each student and ensuring that all students thrive in school and in life, growing into leaders who will make the world a better place. Inspired by accomplished alumnae, caring faculty and staff, and each other, Holton students step up to challenges, try often, fail gracefully, and succeed proudly. The Susanna A. Jones Learning Commons, which opened in October 2024, reflects Mrs. Holton’s vision as a school that feels as warm and welcoming as a home. The Learning Commons functions as a physical heart of the school, provides state-of-the-art technology, and puts students at the center of learning with a design that encourages collaboration and engagement.



The incoming Upper School Head will join a talented senior administrative team, lead an exceptionally experienced and committed faculty; support a passionate, dynamic, and diverse student body; and build on the highly successful eight-year tenure of the current Upper School Head. The new leader will report to the Associate Head of School, Barbara Eghan, and will work closely with Head of School [Penny Evins](#) as well as the Lower and Middle School Heads, ensuring that there is a “one school” mindset even as the divisions maintain distinct approaches to implementing the school mission. While recognizing that “more is not necessarily better,” the Upper School Head will bring creative and strategic ideas to amplify the academic and programmatic excellence of the Upper School and further position Holton graduates to make a difference in our complex and challenging world. The Upper School Head will focus on the assets of time, talent, and treasure, ensuring there is a sense of joyful play alongside a commitment to industry and excellence for all members of the Holton-Arms Upper School community.

Opportunities and Challenges

The priorities, opportunities, and challenges ahead include:

- Supporting, refining, and augmenting the Upper School academic program, building on the school’s excellent reputation and bringing a lens of innovation and creativity in designing a best-in-class program that broadly prepares students to grow as leaders who will make a difference in the world;
- Evaluating, broadening, and evolving signature programs (e.g., Senior Projects, Seminar, and the partnership with Landon School), ensuring these programs take advantage of Holton’s broad and rich network, both within and beyond the metro-DC area, particularly within the alumnae and parent communities;
- Supporting students and faculty as they transition to a new daily schedule, currently in development for deployment in July 2025;
- Deftly managing the pace of change, fully exploring and communicating the purpose and ripple effects of changes;
- Partnering effectively and compassionately with parents, including through parent education and transparent communication;
- Evaluating Upper School systems, structures, and policies for clarity, consistency, and alignment with division priorities; and
- Building community, connection and a spirit of joy between and among students, faculty, and parents, both within the Upper School and across divisions.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The Head of Upper School will bring an impressive record as an educator and community builder who has previously served in roles of considerable responsibility. The most competitive candidates will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:

Professional Qualifications:

- Nuanced understanding of the curricular and co-curricular dimensions of a complex Upper School and particular alignment with Holton's commitment to educating young women;
- Deep knowledge of current and evolving best practices and innovation in Upper School curriculum, pedagogy, and student life;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy, the tactical skills to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy, and the organizational fluency to manage multiple streams of information and respond to situations as they emerge;
- Strong evidence of a personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and a nuanced understanding of how that work lives out in an inclusive school community;
- Experience hiring, supporting, leading, and retaining a talented faculty, providing feedback with an eye towards continuous improvement and operating within the broader framework of a professional learning community committed to talent management;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity across a wide range of audiences.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- Evidence of strategic thinking, creative problem solving, and exploration of innovative ideas;
- The curiosity, confidence, and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback, engaging in challenging conversations with grace;
- Eagerness to engage actively with students and faculty and willingness to prioritize visibility amidst the demands of a busy professional schedule;
- A bias for action alongside a joyful spirit and sense of humor;
- Tremendous affection for teenagers and the adults who support them; and
- High emotional intelligence, with the ability to make thoughtful decisions that center the best interest of the students.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Holton-Arms School.

[School Website](#)

[School History](#)

[The Girls Advantage](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)

[School Profile](#)

[Head of School](#)

[About Bethesda, Maryland](#)



To Apply

Interested candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing interest in this particular position
- A current résumé

As the process moves forward, selected candidates may be asked to submit:

- Writing samples specific to this search
- 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)

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a résumé and cover letter as soon as possible to:

Heather Flewelling
Consultant, Chief Talent Officer
heather.flewelling@carneysandoe.com

Marsha Little
Senior Consultant, Director of
Professional Learning and Development
marsha.little@carneysandoe.com