

# LOWER SCHOOL HEAD SEARCH

## SHERIDAN SCHOOL

Washington, DC

[sheridanschool.org](http://sheridanschool.org)

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES

[CARNEYSANDOE.COM](http://CARNEYSANDOE.COM)

# Mission Statement

Sheridan School's mission is to create an inclusive, vibrant learning community. We take joy in learning, show kindness and empathy towards others, embrace new experiences and ideas, and continually seek a deeper and fuller understanding of the world. We seek to inspire self-knowledge, intellectual discipline, and personal integrity in our community members. At both our city and mountain campuses, the Sheridan community challenges itself to live the ideal of respect for oneself, others, and the environment.

# Diversity Vision

We believe that a diverse and inclusive learning environment is integral to achieving academic excellence. Sheridan's commitment to diversity is grounded in our school mission and the principles of progressive education. We offer a curriculum that promotes social justice and challenges prejudice, within a school culture that embraces and celebrates difference. We recognize and value the experiences that diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, family structure, age, and ability within our school community contribute to a Sheridan education. We ultimately strive to prepare our students to understand the nature of a complex world and to thrive in a multicultural global society.

# Progressive Education at Sheridan

At Sheridan, learning is built around discovery, depth, and meaning. Students are active learners who communicate and collaborate with strength, mindfulness, and compassion. Progressive education at Sheridan means:

- **Fostering intrinsic motivation:** Sheridan teachers believe students learn best when they are intrigued by the work, and teachers are masterful at developing curriculum that inspires and engages. Students do not arrive in the classroom as empty vessels to be filled; they bring their experiences, understanding, and knowledge with them.
- **Implementing a concept-based curriculum:** Sheridan students learn how to think conceptually by making connections, noticing patterns, offering theories, and revising their thinking. They learn the benefits of working collaboratively and the skills needed to make group work productive, both in and out of the classroom.
- **Focusing on social justice:** Social justice is a fundamental value of the school and is infused within all aspects of the culture and curriculum. Instead of simply identifying where injustice occurs, our students are empowered to address important social issues by taking action to make the world a more equitable place.
- **A holistic approach to learning:** Both research and experience prove that the social and emotional education of children is of equal importance to their academic learning. As lifelong students of child development and group dynamics, Sheridan teachers work together with their students to co-create a culture of respect and consideration, aided by the [Responsive Classroom approach](#). This encourages students to take the healthy risks necessary for personal and academic growth.





# At a Glance



Established  
**1927**



Lower School enrollment  
**104**



Employees in the Lower School  
**18**



DC Campus size  
**1.6 acres**



Students of color  
**37%**



Financial aid awarded  
**1.65M**



Endowment  
**\$7.82M**

Total students: 216  
Total faculty: 34  
Total employees: 68

Faculty of color: 32%  
Students receiving aid: 27%  
Annual operating budget: \$9.6M



## Overview

The Sheridan School, located in our nation's capital, offers a truly progressive education with fierce commitments to belonging and joyful learning. Here, students from all four quadrants of DC, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties in Maryland, and communities in Northern Virginia feel known, safe, and understood throughout the important K-8 developmental years they spend at Sheridan.

For nearly a century Sheridan has developed learners and leaders through an intentionally challenging and supportive integrated curriculum. Faculty and staff are passionate, energetic, and nurturing professionals who embody the Sheridan mission and values. These highly qualified educators empower students to frame questions; seek answers; and develop creativity, critical thinking skills, and global awareness. Sheridan students become engaged, socially aware individuals and graduate more than prepared for the complexities of the future; they are leaders prepared to make meaningful change. Sheridan's strengths include its welcoming, open environment, its commitment to respect, and its willingness to engage with issues of equity and justice.

Sheridan is in a strong position with a well-respected program, seasoned faculty, unique urban and mountain campuses, and full enrollment. The academic program is true to the school's progressive roots and includes vibrant experiential and outdoor education programs, well developed community engagement, and a commitment to social justice. The community is inclusive and connected, and every child is known, seen, and valued. The ideal Lower School Head will bring a nuanced understanding of progressive pedagogy, ideally including facility with Responsive Classroom, honed through classroom experience. The incoming Lower School Head will work closely with the Middle School Head, Assistant Head of School, and Head of School Courtney Martin, who joined Sheridan in July 2023. The next Lower School Head will be responsible for all facets of daily Lower School operations and will have deep involvement in admissions, retention, curriculum and instruction, and teacher support. This is an auspicious time to join the Sheridan community, as the school begins work on its new Strategic Plan during the 2024-25 school year and moves forward with a campus renovation (scheduled for completion August 2025) that will provide the necessary facilities to even more fully realize Sheridan's mission and vision.





## Opportunities and Challenges

The priorities, challenges, and opportunities ahead include:

- Partnering with the Assistant Head of School and Lower School faculty to review the arc of the academic program and update curriculum and pedagogy as necessary, ensuring alignment and programmatic cohesion across grades K through 4 and supporting teachers in their design of curriculum and instruction that are consistent with current best practices;
- Furthering academic, programmatic, and community throughlines K-8, while maintaining and respecting the distinct identity of the Lower School;
- Refining and deepening Sheridan's curricular and co-curricular DEIJB programming in support of Lower School students, parents, and employees;
- Working in partnership with the Assistant Head of School to recruit, hire, support, and retain exceptional faculty and staff;
- Supporting Lower School educators in their practice, providing clear expectations, feedback, and avenues for growth;
- Nurturing an even deeper sense of employee community and collaboration; and
- Shepherding Lower School students and their caregivers, furthering Sheridan's student-centered, relational, and joyful culture.



## Desired Qualities and Qualifications

The ideal candidate will offer most or all of the following qualifications and qualities:

### Professional Qualifications

- Deep appreciation and affection for the joys of a K-8 community; experience as a classroom teacher who celebrates, nurtures, and delights in Lower School children;
- Understanding of evolving best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the support of a progressive pedagogy with a strong diversity and social justice lens;
- Personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice, and belonging and the requisite skills to support a diverse student body and faculty and to facilitate critical conversations in the design of ever more inclusive culture, curriculum, and programs;
- The ability to develop and articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills to manage the systems and processes necessary to implement program growth; and
- Experience leading and managing adults through a partnership approach, supporting their growth and development.

### Leadership Style

- A collaborative leadership style built on approachability, responsiveness, and transparent communication;
- Strong sense of and confidence in one's talents, with an understanding of how to step back to leverage and support the strengths of others, bringing people together in support of a shared goal; and
- The confidence and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback.

### Personal Qualities

- Alignment with Sheridan's mission and vision, including a fundamental belief in the joy of working with young children;
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity across a wide range of stakeholders; and
- Eagerness to engage actively with students, faculty, staff, and parents and willingness to prioritize visibility amidst the demands of a busy schedule.



# Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Sheridan School.

[School Website](#)

[Community at Sheridan](#)

[Renovation Project](#)

[Mountain Campus](#)

[High School Placement](#)

[About Washington, DC](#)



# To Apply

Interested candidates are asked to submit the following materials as **separate PDF documents**:

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

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

- Responses to writing prompts 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 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