

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEARCH

SIDWELL FRIENDS

Washington DC

sidwell.edu

Start Date: July 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

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Philosophy Statement

Sidwell Friends School is a dynamic educational community grounded in the Quaker belief that there is “that of God in everyone.” Individually and collectively, we challenge ourselves to pursue excellence in academic, athletic, and artistic realms. We are committed to the joys of exploration and discovery. Differences among us enhance intellectual inquiry, expand understanding, and deepen empathy. The Quaker pillars of the School inspire active engagement in environmental stewardship, global citizenship, and service. We find strength in reflection and shared silence. At the heart of each endeavor, we strive to discern deeper truths about ourselves and our common humanity, preparing students and adults to “let their lives speak.”

Diversity Statement

Sidwell Friends School affirms the centrality of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of academic and campus life. Honoring a multiplicity of voices, we celebrate shared joys and address tensions productively. Together, we are guided by Quaker testimonies and seek to answer the question, “How do we nurture a sense of belonging in our community and demonstrate our commitment to a just world?”

At a Glance



Established
1883



Middle School enrollment
347



Financial aid awarded
\$9.27M



Students of color in the Middle School
57%



Endowment
\$84.5M



Faculty/staff in the Middle School
47



Middle School faculty with advanced degrees
76%



Campus size
26 acres
across two campuses

Total enrollment: 1,144

Total faculty: 144

Faculty in the Middle School: 38

Faculty of color School-wide: 41%

Faculty of color in Middle School: 25%

Students receiving aid: 23%

Annual operating budget: \$61M

Student clubs: 65+

Varsity teams: 22

Annual arts performances: 50+



Overview

Founded in 1883 as a Quaker, co-educational, and urban day school, Sidwell Friends has long been among the nation's strongest independent schools. It continues to center Quaker values in its educational program and practices, believing that "by nurturing children's innate curiosity within a framework of Quaker values, we encourage our students to live adventurous, imaginative, and ethical lives." Similarly, the school's administration, faculty, staff, and Board advance the school through consensus building and other central tenets of Quakerism.

Sidwell Friends seeks a student-centered, community-oriented, relational, and joyful educational leader to serve as Middle School Principal beginning next summer. After serving the community for nine years, current Middle School Principal, Rachel Kane, is departing to become the next Head of School at Friends Community School. The Middle School Principal oversees the work of almost 50 employees in the division and partners closely with the Middle School Assistant Principal and the division's Academic Dean. The Middle School Principal reports to the Head of School, partners closely with and is supported by the Associate Head, collaborates with the Lower and Upper School Principals and Athletic Director, and is a member of the school's dynamic and collaborative Senior Administrative Team.

Priorities, Opportunities, and Challenges

Developing connections and coherence within the Middle School. With distinctive structures for 5th and 6th grade students and 7th and 8th grade students, Sidwell Friends Middle School program strives to provide appropriate levels of support and independence. The intentional nature of the program is appreciated by parents and serves students well. However because 5/6 and 7/8 have differing schedules and are situated on different floors, it can feel that they are separate divisions. In close partnership with the faculty and Middle School administrative team, the next Middle School Head has opportunities to build increased connection, comradery, and collaboration amongst faculty and staff and continue to refine and evolve a program that best serves students. The next Middle School Principal has the opportunity to build relationships, trust, and community and will be well served by an optimistic, communicative, relational, and visible leadership style.



Attending to transitions. The Middle School supports students through multiple transition points: Sidwell Friends Lower School students join the Middle School for 5th grade; 6th and 7th grade are entry years for new students; and 8th graders transition into the Upper School for 9th grade. The Middle School Principal has the opportunity to partner with the other principals, the admissions office, and academic and student support colleagues to ensure smooth and supportive transitions into and out of the Middle School. The Middle School Principal also has the opportunity to support, guide, and partner with parents and guardians during these important years of their children’s lives.

Cultivating and supporting a middle school identity and vision. While supporting transitions is a critical part of the Middle School’s work, the division needs to be more than a waystation between Lower and Upper Schools. The next Middle School Principal has the opportunity to further develop the division’s identity and to find ways to honor, focus, and attend to the exciting and critical time in early adolescence.

Recruiting and retaining a diverse and talented faculty and staff. Post-pandemic, the Middle School division experienced turnover in its professional staff. The next Middle School Principal has the opportunity to build authentic relationships and connections with colleagues and to provide professional opportunities, support, and balance. Providing thoughtful and constructive feedback and being open to feedback, new ideas, and suggestions will aid in the new principal’s success.

PK-12 curricular alignment. Efforts, led by the Associate Head, to develop vertical alignment across the divisions is well underway. The Middle School Academic Dean is highly engaged in this work, and the next Middle School Principal will provide support and encouragement as well as active partnership with colleagues across campus.

Supporting the health and well-being of students. For two academic years (2022-23 and 2023-24) a Mental Health Task Force comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students engaged in studying the mental health of the student community and made recommendations that the school community is now operationalizing. The next Middle School Principal will have the opportunity to examine the schedule, the advisory curriculum and behavioral expectations, and parent education program through thoughtful partnership with the Equity, Justice and Community (EJC) team, athletic department, and other individuals and groups at the school.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

Candidates should have extensive experience and demonstrable skill as a classroom teacher and school leader and alignment with Sidwell Friend's Quaker practices and values.

- A highly relational and collaborative leadership style that invites feedback, respects the perspectives and talents of others and fosters a culture of curiosity, sharing, and trust.
- Joy and enthusiasm for working in schools and with students in grades 5-8.
- Deep understanding of, compassion for, and the ability to connect authentically with students in early adolescence and to provide partnership and support for their parents and guardians.
- Experience leading diverse communities, skill in building inclusive communities, and the ability to respectfully navigate diverse cultural and social situations.
- An orientation to approach their work with curiosity, patience, purpose, and humor and to be a visible and present educational leader.
- Strong interpersonal skills, high EQ, thoughtful self awareness and a style built on approachability, responsiveness, and clear and intentional communication.
- Experience in onboarding, supporting, and developing the professional growth and evolution of educators, and commitment to ongoing learning, professional growth, and reflective practice for oneself and others.
- Excellent communication skills, especially engaging and confident public speaking, close listening, and clear and dynamic writing abilities.
- The confidence and humility to advocate for and embrace new ideas, welcome feedback, and build consensus.
- The strategic skills necessary to advance projects and build and manage systems and processes.
- Highly organized, yet also flexible and adaptable.
- Experience collaborating and partnering with colleagues across divisions, departments, and offices.
- Experience working in a Friends School or a sincere interest in learning about and aligning to the Quaker values central to the mission of the school.
- A joyful spirit, optimistic outlook, and sense of humor.

Learn More

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

[School Website](#)

[Equity, Justice, and Community](#)

[Quaker Values](#)

[School Profile](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[About Washington DC](#)



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;
- Two recent writing samples you authored—you may include speeches, blog posts, articles, or letters to community;
- 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:

Jennifer Wong Christensen

Senior Consultant
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Darryl Ford

Vice President, Education Leadership Services
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Chris Boyle

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The full-time equivalent salary range for this position is \$165 to 200k. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors that include years of experience, education level, and expertise.