



**SIERRA CANYON SCHOOL**  
Chatsworth, California

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**ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL**  
Start Date: July 2022  
[sierracanyonschool.org](http://sierracanyonschool.org)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES



## MISSION

*Sierra Canyon School is an academically excellent, college preparatory school committed to an empowering environment in which students realize their greatest creative, ethical, intellectual, and physical promise. We are defined by an energized, attentive, and diverse student-teacher culture. Sierra Canyon School is a special place to grow for the challenges of a fast-changing world.*

## OVERVIEW

With two campuses, Sierra Canyon School is a premier independent college preparatory day school serving students from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. Sierra Canyon embraces academic and personal excellence and provides an environment where each student is treated as an individual and has the opportunity to strive and attain his or her best.

Sierra Canyon's Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 program draws uncommonly creative thinkers, leaders, and learners from all over Los Angeles. Its trailblazing philosophy—referred to as Learning Forward—continues to drive everything the School does. *Learning Forward* ensures children gain unstoppable momentum to learn and explore, propelling them toward a lifetime of success. Grounded in the School's core values of excellence, integrity, community, independence, and perspective, Sierra Canyon students are fully equipped to rethink the familiar and embrace the unknown.

The School is seeking an Associate Head of School starting in July of 2022. The Associate Head will partner with the Head of School to ensure that the School's educational and operational programs, policies, and practices are interconnected and aligned with its mission, philosophy, and core values. The individual in this role will supervise cross-divisional programs and departments, partner with the division heads to develop curriculum and programs that serve the school, and support faculty, staff, and administrators in their continued growth.

## FAST FACTS

Founded: 1978

Total students: 1,100

Zip codes represented: 90+

Total faculty: 110

Faculty with advanced degrees: 58%

Student/teacher ratio: Lower Campus 9:1;

Upper Campus 10:1

Families receiving financial aid: 38%

Campus size: 42 acres on 2 campuses



## THE SCHOOL

At Sierra Canyon, students gain unstoppable momentum to learn and explore, propelling them toward a lifetime of self-directed success. The complete Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 journey expands every child's vision, ambition, and capability a little more every day. Ingenious educators and intrepid students think and work together to understand the world more deeply—and change it for the better. Diverse, experienced, and qualified teachers are passionate about empowering students to reach their full potential. They inspire students to achieve their personal best and develop a lifelong love of learning. The highly cosmopolitan student community is reflective of the greater Los Angeles area and is represented by 55% student diversity and a 7% international population.

As a leading educational institution in the region, the School believes it should continue to reflect the diverse multicultural population of the greater Los Angeles community, which it proudly serves, within both the student body and the faculty and staff. The School is committed to diversifying its community through student acceptances, curriculum, programming, and faculty/staff recruitment and hiring practices, in order to promote a culture that is inclusive, welcoming, and celebratory of all. As a part of Sierra Canyon School's commitment to ongoing reflection and constant review of its curriculum, the administration and faculty began to conduct an internal audit of all diversity, equity, and inclusion elements within each grade level and department in the summer of 2020.

Since its founding in 1978, Sierra Canyon School has worked extremely hard to be a good neighbor to the Chatsworth residential and equestrian community in which it is located. Through a number of efforts, the School remains dedicated to being a responsible and caring member of the greater community.





## ACADEMICS

On the expansive, green grounds of Sierra Canyon's 17-acre Lower Campus, the Lower School program (Pre-K to grade 6) lays a firm foundation for learning and growing. In the younger grades, expert early childhood teachers nurture children's intellectual and moral development in equal measure. Teachers place strong emphasis on the development of basic skills within small instructional groups. Students work at their appropriate instructional level, regardless of age and grade, and learning centers are utilized to best meet students' individual instructional needs. The later years of Lower School build curiosity and confidence through active questioning, real-world problem-solving, and thoughtful small-group work. By the end of the transitional 6th grade year, students have grown into strikingly self-aware, self-directed young thinkers and citizens, ready for the challenges of Middle School.

The Middle School program (grades 7 and 8) helps students effectively direct their inquisitive energy, while helping build the academic, social, and emotional skills to thrive as a learner and individual. Middle School students share a sweeping, sunlit Upper Campus building with students in grades 9 through 12. Engaging core courses, experiential learning trips, service learning, and Peak Week—a week of local and international travel opportunities—challenge students and encourage them to take advantage of educational experiences that evoke curiosity and the desire to explore. Within this dynamic educational setting, students are able to thrive in an environment where individual growth and free thought are encouraged and celebrated.

Sierra Canyon students' *Learning Forward* journey culminates in the sunlit intellectual laboratory of the Upper School (grades 9 through 12), where their well-earned academic and personal confidence launches them into college, career, and life beyond. The Upper School offers a rigorous academic curriculum taught by passionate, diverse, and expert teachers. The program is designed to provide a



wide range of intellectual opportunities that allow the student to delve deeply into areas of particular interest. An entrepreneurial, question-driven philosophy fosters both independent thinking and productive collaboration. Guided by attentive teachers and college counselors, students confidently determine their own path to college and personal and career success. Upper School graduates regularly enroll in top colleges and universities.

## **CHATSWORTH, CALIFORNIA**

Chatsworth is a diverse neighborhood in the Los Angeles area noted for having one of the lowest population densities in the city. While Los Angeles might offer residents the benefits of urban living, many residents who choose to live in Chatsworth enjoy its natural beauty, rural atmosphere, family-friendly environment, and welcoming community.

Tranquil and serene, Chatsworth has many recreational facilities and parks scattered throughout the neighborhood, making it easy to enjoy an active outdoor lifestyle. Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park is the neighborhood's largest park, offering 680-acres of biking and hiking trails, horseback riding, picnic areas, historical sites, and nature and wildlife viewings. Another popular park in the neighborhood, Stoney Point Park, is favored by rock climbers and outdoor enthusiasts interested in exploring the park's huge boulders, mini caves, and short trails. Many equestrians come to Chatsworth as well because it's one of four existing horse-zoned properties. In fact, horses can be seen daily utilizing the equestrian trail which runs along the perimeter of Sierra Canyon's Lower Campus and continues to the north of the Upper Campus. Sierra Canyon built and maintains a portion of that trail.





Of course, Chatsworth's proximity to Los Angeles offers convenient access to the amenities of this major city. The City of Los Angeles, with four million people, is the most populous city in California and scores high on just about every livability index. On the entertainment front, LA is home to the Los Angeles Music Center, one of the largest performing arts centers in the nation; The Walt Disney Concert Hall (home to the Los Angeles Philharmonic); the Dolby Theater (venue for the Academy Awards); and the Los Angeles Opera. The city also has a remarkably robust art scene with 841 museums and galleries in the region. Notable museums include the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Getty Center, the Natural History Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The city is home to an unusual number of professional sports teams, including the Dodgers and Angels in baseball, the Lakers and Clippers in basketball, and the Chargers and Rams in football. LA is also home to some of the nation's top colleges and universities, including UCLA, University of Southern California, Occidental College, Loyola Marymount University, and Mount St. Mary's College. For those who love outdoor sports, state parks and four national forests and mountains within easy driving distance.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Sierra Canyon is a dynamic and successful school that has made extraordinary progress under the leadership of its Founding Head of School. **The Associate Head will assume a key leadership position as an active partner for the current Head of School.** Together, they will engage in promoting and achieving the goals of Sierra Canyon's ambitious strategic agenda. The Associate Head will be a visible presence on campus and engaged with all stakeholders. They will be a vital member of the Senior Leadership Team and will have the primary responsibility for leading initiatives in several areas



of school operations. The Associate Head will be engaged in leading the academic program, building strong stakeholder relationships, enrollment management, and fundraising.

### **Academic Opportunities**

- The Associate Head will oversee the excellent academic program and be responsible for the School's day-to-day operations.
- They partner closely with the outstanding division heads to enhance their leadership of the faculty through standardizing practices for hiring and evaluation. They will also be thoroughly engaged in the curricular goals of the School and offer support to the leadership teams in dealing with programming, parental issues, faculty concerns. etc.
- The Associate Head will work collaboratively to enhance Sierra Canyon's professional development program; connect and build relationships with the faculty and staff; and help bind together the multiple constituencies that make Sierra Canyon such a vibrant institution.

### **Stakeholder Relationships and Leadership Opportunities**

- Under the leadership of the Head of School, the Associate Head will be a visible contributor to the board and build relationships with key administrators and trustees in support of the policies and strategic goals of the School.
- The Associate Head will focus on building collaborative and productive relationships with the School's administrators, faculty, and staff and will be empowered to collaborate in solving problems, making decisions, and offering support to Sierra Canyon's employees.
- The Associate Head will have the opportunity to build relationships with students and parents by engaging with them daily. In collaboration with the division leaders and teachers, they will become the 'go-to' person in dealing with issues involving students and parents when opportunities and questions arise.





- The Associate Head will support the School through attending events and will bolster the School's marketing efforts through engagement with the enrollment management team and being an active partner at admissions events.
- They will work closely with the development office and take the lead, in collaboration with the Director of Development, in growing the School's annual fund success.
- The Associate Head will support the new DEI Director in their work with the school community.

## **DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The Associate Head of School will enthusiastically embrace the School's mission, community, and culture. They will be an experienced, independent school leader who leads through building strong, positive relationships and who interacts joyfully with students, faculty, and parents.

The Associate Head will enjoy the opportunity to be a visible, vibrant, and enthusiastic presence on campus. They will enjoy connecting with others and will relish the opportunities for empowered leadership that this position holds while appreciating the mentorship of the current Head of School. The successful candidate will be a strong, consistent communicator, and a leader who is an authentic collaborator with the ability to be decisive when necessary.





## 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 one-page statement of educational philosophy and practice.
- 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:

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