

Waterside School Head of School: Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we hiring a Head of School rather than an Executive Director?

We are seeking a Head of School with the full authority and scope of responsibilities associated with the nation's finest independent school leaders. In the past, we operated under a dual Executive Director/Head of School model. After careful consideration, we believe Waterside's future will be best served by consolidating these roles into one position. This decision is grounded in the strength of our seasoned and highly respected team of academic and administrative leaders, whose expertise will be a vital asset in attracting top-tier candidates.

What role will the Board of Trustees play in the search process?

The Board is responsible for hiring, supporting, and evaluating the Head of School, its sole employee. The Board has created a four-person search committee of members who are deeply committed to the School and its success.

What role will the Search Committee play?

Members of the search committee vet, interview, and evaluate candidates that are referred to them by the search consultant. Finalists will visit the school, and, after receiving input from the community, the search committee will make a recommendation to the Board on whom to hire as the next Head of School.

Will people other than the search committee get to meet the candidates?

Absolutely. Community input in this process is very important. The finalists – usually 2-3 people – will be invited to campus in the fall and have an opportunity to meet with members of the Waterside community. Community members will, in turn, be asked to provide their confidential feedback via a survey to the search committee.

How will the school select the right person to lead Waterside?

In the spring, our search consultant will conduct a community survey and visit school for a full day of meetings with a wide range of constituents. Using the information gathered from this process, the consultant, in partnership with the search committee, will develop a position statement that articulates the opportunities and challenges that await the new Head of School as well as the professional skills and personal characteristics most desirable and relevant to successfully lead Waterside.

Waterside has committed and dedicated professionals in the building – wouldn't it be easier to choose someone here?

Waterside is fortunate to have such a talented group of educators working at the school. Individuals who have an interest in the Head's role will be encouraged to apply for the position. All candidates will be considered and reviewed in the same manner in order to maintain the integrity of the process and ensure we select the leader we believe to be best suited to be the next Waterside Head of School.

How long will the search process take?

Like most independent schools, Waterside will engage in a thoughtful and deliberate search. We anticipate the following timeline:

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|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Position posted | April 2025 |
| Semifinalist interviews | August 2025 |
| Finalist visits | September/October 2025 |
| Appointment | Fall, 2025 |
| Start date | July 1, 2026 |

What if I know someone who may be interested?

Interested candidates should contact George Sanderson of [Educators Collaborative](#) directly. We also encourage all members of the Waterside community to make referrals of candidates. Please contact George to share names and contact information of potential candidates, and George will reach out to candidates confidentially.

What is the scope of the Head of School search?

We are conducting a nation-wide search. While we know there are many talented educational leaders locally, we also know that Waterside is a distinctive school with a national reputation for excellence. We are thus confident that well qualified individuals from outside the Fairfield County area will likely be interested.

What if I have additional questions?

Feel free to contact the Search Committee chair, Lisa Stuart (search@watersideschool.org) directly or George for more information.



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