



# Chesapeake Academy Head of School Search July 1, 2023

**Chesapeake Academy**  
107 Steamboat Road  
P.O. Box 8  
Irvington, Virginia 22480  
<https://chesapeakeacademy.org/>



**The  
Education  
Group**

Located in historic Irvington, Virginia, where the Rappahannock River meets the Chesapeake Bay, Chesapeake Academy is a PreK 3&4 - Grade 8 school dedicated to preparing each student for future academic, ethical, social, and physical endeavors in an intellectually challenging environment.

Bound by common goals and aspirations, Chesapeake Academy students experience an academically challenging, traditional liberal arts curriculum taught by teachers who model creativity, commitment, flexibility, teamwork, and a love of learning. Intellectual curiosity is valued, laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning, growth, and achievement. Our caring and supportive environment guides children to develop confidence in their abilities. In all aspects of school life, teachers know their students well.

This relationship allows teachers to address differences in learning styles and teach in ways children will experience their greatest achievement. In keeping with our heritage, Chesapeake Academy students are an interconnected community of learners. Our school, guided by a purposeful social and ethical curriculum, is a place where friendships and consideration for others thrive and responsibility and leadership develop. We embrace each other's beliefs and differences and discover that our diversity enriches us.

The school's community, formed by a unique partnership of parents, students, teachers, alumni and neighbors, works together to help children achieve academic excellence and personal growth. We believe students learn best when teachers, parents, and children work in harmony.



From PreK 3&4 through Eighth Grade, Chesapeake Academy students develop and articulate ideas. The inclusion of visual and performing arts in the curriculum encourages self-discovery and creative expression. The physical education and athletic programs promote lifelong personal fitness and character development.

School-wide experiences and community service opportunities encourage students to be comfortable expressing their ideas in front of others as well as assuming future leadership roles. Chesapeake Academy believes that an enriched and challenging academic curriculum, within a nurturing, child-centered environment, provides the foundation for future.

## MISSION

To inspire each student to approach learning with curiosity and creativity, pursue excellence in all endeavors, and act with integrity -- so each can make our community and world a better place.



## CORE VALUES

- To prepare each student for his or her future academic, ethical, social and physical endeavors
- To provide a nurturing environment where students build confidence as they rise to the challenge of developing new skills
- To model creativity, ignite curiosity, demonstrate commitment and flexibility, work as a team, and lay the foundation for life-long learning in our students so our students demonstrate the same values
- To foster strong relationships between students and teachers to allow teachers to know students well and address each student's learning style
- To cultivate an interconnected community of learners where friendship, consideration, responsibility, and leadership thrive
- To embrace each other's beliefs and differences and discover that diversity enriches us
- To work in harmony with parents, teachers, and students for the students' academic achievement and personal growth
- To encourage self-discovery and self-expression through the integration of the arts
- To promote life-long fitness and character development through athletics
- To engage in school-wide and community service so that students are comfortable expressing their ideas and assuming leadership roles
- To develop global citizens who value a pluralistic society and who have the skills to tackle 21st century challenges



On September 18th, 1889, the first classes of Chesapeake Academy were held. It was then known as the Chesapeake Male and Female Academy. Eighteen years later the last commencement exercises of the old Academy were held. During those 18 years, approximately 450 students were educated at the Academy, from Irvington, Kilmarnock, Weems, Ocran, White Stone, and four surrounding counties. By May of 1890 through 1907, before the first session ended, the “study and recreation” building, known as Academy Hall (now The Hope & Glory Inn) was completed. The Academy’s courses extended from the preparatory department of reading, writing, spelling, geography, arithmetic, elementary English and primary U.S. history, to preparation for entry into the “senior classes” of any first rate college.

During the summer of 1965, as an alternative to public education, three families decided to re-establish the Chesapeake Academy. The Rowe Family of Irvington donated the property and main buildings. The faculty numbered only seven, with grades 3 and above being taught by the entire faculty. Class size was limited to 15. By 1969 the Lower School building was dedicated, and a gym with four classrooms was opened in the fall of 1973.

Despite some financial struggles, the students continued to excel, with approximately 75% of the graduates attending prep schools. Parents, trustees and the community were convinced of the value of an independent school in the region. The Academy became a member of the Virginia Association of Independent Schools in 1991. In 1997, the Board initiated a capital campaign to raise the necessary funds for much needed classrooms and renovations. The campaign successfully raised \$1,000,000 for these improvements to the school’s facilities.

Today, with an enrollment of 144 students in Preschool through 8th grade from 19 communities and five counties, 27 faculty and staff, a 33 ½ -acre campus, 800 alumni, a \$950,000 endowment, transportation services, an active State-licensed Extended Day program, Chesapeake Academy looks to the future with anticipation and justifiable confidence.

## Small School. Huge Classroom.

This is not just a tagline. Chesapeake Academy students develop a sense of place in the rich history and environment of the Northern Neck and broader region of Eastern Virginia. Students discover, explore, and make connections between concepts and ideas in and out of the classroom. Teachers make full use of our beautiful campus, Nature Trail, Outdoor Classroom, the surrounding town of Irvington, and beyond to provide our students with authentic and meaningful experiences.



## Strengths of the School

The next Head of School will benefit from CA's many strengths, including:

- Outstanding leadership from previous Heads of School working in concert with the Board of Trustees. Their close working relationship underpins the strong sense of family and community.
- Committed, energetic, and creative faculty who model lifelong learning.
- Commitment to providing a safe environment in which students can learn, take risks, and develop into lifelong learners.
- The school is guided by a long-standing philosophy statement and an updated mission statement (2017), resulting in a high degree of alignment and consistent implementation across all programs and operations.
- Faculty and staff have committed themselves to differentiated instruction and have worked to implement significant changes across the curriculum and at all grade levels.
- A curricular commitment to global awareness, pluralism and 21st century skills.
- A strong sense of community and genuine love for the school that reaches beyond the classroom and into the hearts and minds of the community at large without a direct connection to this unique place.
- Continuity of leadership of the school and enthusiastic faculty with a low turnover.



To explore more about the curriculum, program and culture of the school, visit : [www.chesapeakeacademy.org](http://www.chesapeakeacademy.org)

Situated along the banks of Carter’s Creek in Virginia’s historic “Northern Neck,” Irvington is a delightful small town located about 70 miles east of the state capital in Richmond. A quintessential coastal village, the town is home to two nationally recognized inns and, along with the neighboring towns of Kilmarnock and White Stone, the area has much to offer: boating, fishing, golf, shopping, antiques, museums, outdoor festivals and concerts, farmer’s markets, a wide variety of dining, wineries, parks and nature trails, and a new family entertainment complex boasting six first-run movie screens, miniature golf, a climbing wall and ropes course, and more.

The Northern Neck peninsula—bounded by the Potomac River to the north, the Rappahannock River to the south, and the majestic Chesapeake Bay to the east—is the “birthplace of our nation” with three of the first five American presidents being born here, and the home of other prominent families that helped form our nation and signed the Declaration of Independence. In addition to its many historic sites, it’s a land where generational watermen continue to harvest rockfish, blue crabs, and the famous Virginia oyster, and where family farms still flourish to this day.

Easy day excursions: Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, Yorktown, Richmond, Fredericksburg

Weekend excursions: Washington DC, Blue Ridge Mountains, Virginia Beach





# CHESAPEAKE ACADEMY FAST FACTS

## SCHOOL



**Established:** 1889-1907  
**Re-established:** 1965  
**Grades:** PreK 3&4 - Grade 8  
**Enrollment:** 144  
**Average Class Size:** 14  
**Surrounding counties served:** 8  
**Campus:** 33 1/2 acres, includes the main academic building, a dining hall, the Nettie Lokey Wiley Early Childhood Center, the gymnasium  
**Head of School residence:** Privately situated adjacent to campus. Renovated in 2017.

## FINANCE



**Tuition:** PK 3&4: \$7,000, K-4: \$13,100  
 5-8: \$13,800  
**Endowment:** \$950,000  
**Students Receiving Tuition Assistance:** 50%  
**Annual Giving & Fundraising Events:** \$456,000

## FACULTY



**Full-time Faculty/Staff:** 27  
**Faculty/Staff with Advanced Degrees:** 14  
**Student:Teacher Ratio:** 8:1

## Memberships, Accreditation & Awards



- #1 K-12 Independent School in Eastern Virginia 9 years in a row
- #1 Best PreSchool in Eastern Virginia
- #1 Best Summer Camps in Eastern Virginia
- #3 Best Charity Event in Eastern Virginia - CA Annual Auction

# The Position

Chesapeake Academy has high standards and benefits from a legacy of inspiring and caring faculty, administrators, and trustees. The next Head of School will need poise, patience, confidence, and wisdom to effectively balance the demands associated with this exciting leadership opportunity. A successful candidate will be able to demonstrate the following talents, skills, attributes, values, and experiences:

- A combination of vision, innovative spirit, intelligence, kindness, humility, optimism and a sense of humor
- An effective relationship builder who leads by genuinely knowing and caring about students, employees, and families
- An excellent listener and an effective communicator in writing, speaking, and interpersonal relationships
- Commitment to and sophisticated perspective in regard to the challenge of ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion work
- Strong capacity to navigate difficult conversations, as well as knowledge and experience in regard to structuring effective decision-making
- Inspirational ability to help teachers be the drivers of school improvement
- Collaborative skills in thinking with others about the future of the school to ensure that it remains a leader in PK-8 education
- Ability to embrace fundraising with passion and focus
- Experience and skill as a recruiter of administrators, faculty and staff
- Desire and capacity to thrive in the Chesapeake Academy community and region
- Ability to participate enthusiastically, knowledgeably and effectively in the overall enrollment management process for the school
- Experience working effectively with a voluntary and deeply committed Board of Trustees



Chesapeake Academy has developed a cohesive school community and published a comprehensive curriculum. The school's program reflects a commitment to differentiated instruction and 21st century skills, including global awareness and pluralism. The current enrollment reflects an average class size of fourteen with room to grow post-pandemic, as the need for social distancing decreases. Advancement, in terms of both enrollment and fund development, is a critical undertaking as the school stabilizes and grows its highly effective program.

Opportunities ahead include:

- Increase enrollment through effective marketing and creative outreach.
- Continue to raise funds to sustain the generous financial aid program, improve faculty compensation, and ensure the school's future through building the endowment.
- Provide appropriate staffing to achieve these goals.
- Continue the process of regular curricular review, revision, and innovation
- Decrease dependence on annual fundraisers.
- Continue to build upon a solid financial foundation and budget process that is transparent and accurate. The next Head of School will appreciate the strengths of the school and embrace the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead.



The next Head of School will appreciate the strengths of the school and embrace the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead. They are:

- Sustain and pursue academic excellence as a top priority. Stay abreast of and promote proven best practices in teaching and learning. Foster the critical thinking, instructional strategies, and classroom experiences that inspire lifelong learners. Provide the structure, encouragement, tools, and training for faculty to deliver a program characterized as challenging and engaging. Lead the faculty to continually review the entire scope and sequence of curriculum and programs.
- Nurture the Chesapeake Academy culture, which has been historically and currently characterized by warmth, kindness, and respect. Model these virtues and be a visible and engaging presence to the faculty, students, parents and larger school community.
- Bring experience with implementing diversity, equity, inclusivity, and practices. Embed this work authentically and purposefully across the school. Listen to diverse voices while also leading the inevitable challenging conversations that this work requires; build consensus and confidence in regard to the school's direction and progress.
- Bring warmth and a sense of humor to the day to day interworking of the school day. Continue to build and support the network of current and past parents, as well as with students, alumni and the larger Chesapeake Academy community.
- Attend to the importance of positive faculty and staff morale. Delegate responsibility appropriately, and build effective collaborative teams, emphasizing a one-school ethos. Invite input and robust discussion, but also demonstrate decisiveness and leadership. Ensure that policies and procedures are handled consistently across the institution.
- Lead in providing relevance, clarity and commitment to the mission and core values of the school and continue to use them as milestones by which to grow.
- Develop clear strategic direction as the school emerges from the pandemic. Work with the board, faculty and all employees of the school to clearly define a forward-thinking focus for all aspects of Chesapeake Academy.
- Continue to ensure the school's ability to recruit, retain, support and inspire an excellent faculty in an increasingly competitive market.
- Effectively raise funds to continue to build the endowment for the school, as well as to meet the annual needs of the budget, allowing the school to be less tuition dependent and striving to ensure that it is able to effectively implement future strategic priorities.

# How to Apply

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Prospective candidates should send the following materials in a single PDF document to the search consultants:

- Letter of interest specifically addressing this position and school
- Resume (education and work experience)
- Statement of educational philosophy
- List of five professional references with contact information
- Letters of reference, if available, but not required

*Candidates will be evaluated as materials are received.*

*The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs, or school-administered programs.*



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