

## **Bio for Peter Laipson**

### **Candidate for Head of School at Commonwealth School**

Peter Laipson is the Chief Academic Officer at the Woodrow Wilson Graduate School of Teaching and Learning in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was part of the founding team for that competency-based graduate program developed in collaboration with MIT. Employing the principles and protocols of user-centered design, the Woodrow Wilson Graduate School has reimagined teacher preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Since 2016, Peter has filled various roles at that nascent and growing enterprise, including serving as Chief Administrative Officer. His key responsibilities and achievements include oversight of all curricular and non-curricular aspects of the program, such as recruitment and admissions, curricular redesign, development of the clinical education program, and equity and student support. Peter co-wrote the organization's mission and vision, and he led the successful effort to secure state approval to award the M.Ed. degree. He works to share the model with prospective partner institutions, including school districts and teacher preparation programs locally, nationally and internationally. However, after several years in the world of higher education, Peter is eager to return to his passion and work again with secondary school students and teachers.

After graduating from Brown University *magna cum laude* with a B.A. in religious studies, Peter taught history for 3 years at University High School in San Francisco. He then spent a year as a Visiting Instructor in the Department of History at Bowdoin College. Peter went on to earn both his M.A. and Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan. Returning to secondary school teaching, Peter joined the faculty of Concord Academy in 1999 initially as a history teacher, later serving there in various capacities, including as History Department Head and, ultimately, as Dean of Faculty until 2011. In the latter role, Peter was responsible for recruitment, hiring, supervision, professional development and evaluation of the 66-member faculty.

Prior to his current position, Peter served from 2011-2015 as the Provost and Vice President of Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. In this role he was the chief executive officer for a residential early college of 350 students, 50 faculty, and 100 staff. His responsibilities and achievements included working with the Overseers to direct strategic initiatives; direction of all functions of that branch of Bard College; substantial fundraising; management of a \$21 million budget; overhaul of marketing and recruitment efforts; and serving as the primary liaison with all other divisions of Bard College.

Peter writes, "I understand not just the urgency of creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning community but also the ways that school leaders can achieve that end (and the challenges one can expect in the process). I also understand the prospects and pitfalls facing an independent institution with a distinctive mission and how to communicate effectively the value – and the values – of the school community. Above all, I know how to foster an agile school culture, one that is capable of responding to the needs of the future as it sustains the virtues of the past."