



**ST. PAUL ACADEMY
AND SUMMIT SCHOOL**
St. Paul, Minnesota

HEAD OF SCHOOL
Start Date: July 2022
spa.edu



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES



ST. PAUL ACADEMY AND SUMMIT SCHOOL

MISSION

Shaping the minds and the hearts of the people who will change the world.

VALUES

The SPA experience is shaped and defined by six core values: achievement, accountability, community, resilience, inventiveness, and passion.

OVERVIEW

St. Paul Academy and Summit School is a K-12 independent day school with two campuses, located in the heart of St. Paul, Minnesota. The school is well-known for its bright and curious students, exceptional faculty, and warm, welcoming school culture. The St. Paul Academy and Summit School (SPA) experience is shaped and defined by six core values: *achievement, accountability, community, resilience, inventiveness, and passion*. The school's mission—Shaping the minds and the hearts of the people who will change the world—is a promise to its students and its families and is intentionally ambitious so that each member of the community is compelled to be thoughtful about everything they do.

SPA students understand that they have a responsibility to challenge themselves while engaging with and contributing to the collective learning experience. At SPA, one size does not fit all and no one “teaches to the test.” The SPA experience is varied and dynamic; students are seen and embraced for who they are and are given all the unique tools they need to realize their goals. For example, in the earliest grades, children spend two years with the same two-teacher team, allowing for a longer developmental arc and deeper understanding of each child's needs. It is with this same mentality that the Upper School has chosen not to follow the Advanced Placement program; instead, SPA students and faculty go well beyond the AP curriculum in depth and complexity just for the love of learning.

Additionally, because failure is an important part of education, teachers work with students to cultivate successful strategies for dealing with inevitable setbacks by taking risks and pushing themselves beyond easy answers. At every turn, caring support is coupled with high standards. And, in this safe and intentional environment, students of all ages can engage with ideas of all sorts more deeply and thoughtfully than they ever imagined they could.

FAST FACTS

Total students: 928

Students of color: 34%

Total faculty: 128

Faculty with advanced degrees: 80%

Student/teacher ratio: 7:1

Financial aid budget: ~\$3.8M (2020-2021)

Students receiving aid: 25%

Annual operating budget: ~\$30M

Endowment: \$66M



St. Paul Academy and Summit School seeks a new Head of School to assume the role in July 2022. Strong candidates will be intellectual risk-takers with experience leading in a complex organization. They will have a deep personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and will understand the work that is necessary to nurture the harmony that can only be achieved when all members of a community feel connected to one another.

SCHOOL HISTORY

The origins of St. Paul Academy and Summit School lie in the late 19th century when St. Paul was undergoing a transformation from a small river town into a bustling city. The population and building boom of the 1880s and 1890s laid the groundwork for a wide array of institutions and the emergence of civic and cultural leaders. Many of these leaders had strong ties to the East Coast, and they wished for their children an educational experience similar to the Eastern private day schools.

St. Paul Academy for boys was thus founded in 1900. As enrollment grew, the school built the handsome brick building on Randolph Avenue that still houses the Upper School today. The Summit School for girls opened in this same time frame, offering a liberal arts education for the girls of St. Paul. In 1923, having outgrown its space, it moved to a brick building on Goodrich Avenue, the current home of the Lower School.

For more than six decades, Summit School and St. Paul Academy operated as sibling schools. In 1969, the two schools merged, combining curricula, faculty, and students in a process that was later referred to as “the Big Bang” of the school’s history. The intense work before, during, and just after the merger gave rise to a new and exciting chapter in the school’s history, one that fully embraced the future of schooling while drawing from both schools’ traditions.



The dynamic school that grew out of the 1969 merger is now recognized as one of the top independent schools in the country. St. Paul Academy and Summit School's innovative curriculum, its exceptional faculty, the accomplishments of its students and alumni/ae, and its culture of engagement and intellectual curiosity are a testament to the promise and ideals of a strong liberal arts education.

THE SCHOOL

SPA is fully committed to setting its students on the path to be fearless learners, compassionate classmates, and active global citizens. These objectives shape the work done at every grade level, in each division, and across all co-curricular activities. Accordingly, faculty and staff have designed—and continue to refine—the SPA program to meet each child where they are and usher them confidently onto their next adventure.

At the core of SPA's warm and inclusive culture is the belief that an educational community is at its best when it includes and values all voices, perspectives, and experiences. To that end, SPA's DEI work is ongoing and integrated into every facet of school life. In the fall of 2020, SPA launched an initiative entitled *Defining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at SPA*. A consideration of the impact and influence of race at SPA is a top priority for the Steering Committee that will lead this initiative, as is how gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status influence the school's quest to create an inclusive culture. This exciting project invites the community to examine the intersection between its ideals as SPA strives to create a vibrant and equitable pluralism and life at school as a lived experience.



In addition to this new initiative, a variety of ongoing programs help build an inclusive community, including affinity groups for students in all three divisions, faculty and staff affinity groups, professional development opportunities, and community partnerships that promote the appreciation and understanding of different cultures. Every year, SPA also sends students to participate in the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC).

SPA is accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, the Cum Laude Society, The College Board, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools.

ACADEMICS

The Lower School supports and expands children's natural love of learning and eagerness to be a part of a community. At this level, the curriculum introduces children to the fundamentals of intellectual inquiry within a safe, nurturing community characterized by close attention to each student. A child's academic day alternates between homeroom and specialist classes. Throughout the year, teachers differentiate instruction with the understanding that students' abilities are constantly evolving, developing, and changing. As a result, Lower School students develop exceptional academic skills in addition to the social/emotional tools that will serve them as they move up to the Middle School. Students also develop a deep affection and respect for their teachers and peers, which is evident in the sense of community and warmth that permeates the entire Lower School.



The Middle School academic curriculum emphasizes wide-ranging exploration and skill development in specific disciplines, taught by teachers who understand and genuinely care for students at this age. Organization and accountability are emphasized, and students learn to take responsibility for managing their work. Technology is a critical component of Middle School learning, with a 1:1 laptop program integrated into all disciplines. A series of experiential learning opportunities complement and support the curriculum. The division supports the social/emotional needs of young adolescents through use of the *Developmental Designs for Middle School* social/emotional learning program and an advisory system that sets clear standards and expectations for individual behavior and community norms and provides the support that students need at this age.

SPA's Upper School is an extraordinary learning and teaching community that offers a challenging and innovative college preparatory program emphasizing discussion-based learning. The intellectual community is characterized by close student-faculty and student-student relationships that foster advanced inquiry, lively discussion around Harkness seminar tables, and deep engagement with ideas. By design, the academic program allows for built-in time during the school day for co-curricular activities, studying, and meeting with teachers, all of which facilitates a balanced approach to homework. Students are energetic and informed participants in discussions, nuanced and accountable in their analysis, and articulate in their critique and defense of ideas. The program culminates in seminars that use college-level texts and require substantial independent work.

While SPA has chosen not to offer designated Advanced Placement classes, its courses are designed to go well beyond the prescribed AP curriculum in depth and complexity. When SPA students do elect to take AP exams, they are very successful: more than 61% of students who take an AP exam earn a score of 4 or 5, and more than 93% earn a score of 3 or above.



The fundamental building block of the K-12 curriculum is the rotating six-day schedule, which—in all three divisions—allows time for deep exploration, collaborative and individual work, community and co-curricular time, and one-on-one conversations with faculty.

THE ARTS

In Lower School, art is a vibrant, creative, and essential part of day-to-day life. Students participate in formal art classes taught by specialist teachers, where they explore and express themselves through many media and styles. In music classes, students are taught by teachers trained in the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Instruction in singing, movement, instruments, and speech guides students through exploration, improvisation, and composition. Performing on stage is an important part of the music experience in the Lower School.

All Middle School students take drama, art, and music courses and may audition for three annual theater productions. The Grade 6 studio art course covers various media and techniques; Grade 7 studio art courses introduce two-dimensional art techniques and three-dimensional ceramics. In Grade 8, students may opt to take elective courses in two-

COLLEGE MATRICULATION

Students from the classes of 2016-2020 enrolled at the following colleges and universities, among others:

Amherst College
Bates College
Boston University
Brown University
Bryn Mawr College
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University
Colby College
Cornell University
Columbia University
Dartmouth College
Duke University
Fordham University
Georgetown University
Harvard College
Johns Hopkins University
Macalester College
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Middlebury College
Morehouse College
Northwestern University
Princeton University
Skidmore College
Smith College
Stanford University
Swarthmore College
Trinity College
University of Chicago
University of Edinburgh
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Southern California
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt University
Wellesley College
Wesleyan University
Williams College
Yale University



and three-dimensional art. The required Grade 6 drama class prepares students for later electives, including acting, production and performance, and scriptwriting. All Grade 6 students participate in choir or instrumental classes, and in Grades 7 and 8, students continue in the ensemble of their choice.

All Upper School students are required to take at least three semesters of fine arts, choosing among visual arts classes, musical ensembles, or theater courses. Upper School music courses are ensemble-based and include two orchestral ensembles, two choral ensembles, a jazz ensemble, and the Honors Music Seminar. All ensembles perform in two concerts every year, and the extracurricular a cappella singing group also performs at school events. Visual arts coursework is offered in ceramics, drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, and the video arts. The Honors Art Seminar is designed for the most advanced students, who exhibit their work in a dedicated show at the end of the year. Topic-based theater courses focus on Theatrical Arts, acting, design, directing, and production. Three audition-based theatrical performances each year include the Fall Play, the Winter One-Acts, and the Spring Musical.

ATHLETICS

Athletic competition is a powerful educational experience that promotes the development of leadership, self-confidence, sportsmanship, and commitment, and it is in alignment with SPA's mission of shaping the minds and the hearts of the people who will change the world. SPA student-athletes are coached to work hard towards collective goals, to strengthen their individual skills, and to persevere when confronted by challenges.



Team sports at SPA are introduced as class activities in the physical education program starting in Grade 3, and interscholastic competition begins in Grade 5. Ninety-two percent of Middle School students participate in at least one SPA team sport. In the Upper School, 88% of students compete on at least one SPA team. SPA varsity teams are consistently ranked in the top 10 in the state, and SPA athletes are regularly recognized through selection to regional and national team events. Annually, the school fields 90 teams in 17 sports, with several teams offered in cooperation with nearby schools. Sports offered include cross country, football, soccer, swimming and diving, tennis, volleyball, alpine and Nordic skiing, fencing, basketball, hockey, baseball, lacrosse, golf, softball, and track and field.

STUDENT LIFE

SPA sponsors multiple affinity groups for students in all three divisions who share a common aspect of their identity. Lower School students may join Common Ground Jr., the affinity group for students of color, or Intercultural Club Jr., a DEI program launched in 2020 for all K-5 students. In the Middle School, students may join a wider range of Affinity and/or Special Interest Groups (SIGs), many of which are then continued in the Upper School. The Upper School offers an exceptionally robust slate of Affinity Groups and SIGs, largely organized by students who work with a faculty advisor. These student-led groups are responsible for planning a number of annual events, such as the Martin Luther King Day assembly, Cinco de Mayo and Día de los Muertos celebrations, Indigenous Peoples' Day programming, and "Day After the Election" discussions. Groups range from Action for Gender Equality to Black and Brown Girls (BBG) to Latinos Unidos to Mishpacha (Jewish Student Affinity).



SPA's K-12 student development programs are designed to give students skills that promote wellness and balance. These programs teach strategies for persevering through developmental challenges that accompany learning and growing, and support academic excellence by tending to the environments and mindsets that allow students to engage with and work through challenges in healthy and productive ways. The Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) is the school's center of expertise for academic support, learning differences, and faculty professional development around learning and brain development. SPA provides support services for students with documented learning disabilities based on a student's individual circumstances, and the school adjusts methods of instruction whenever appropriate to support students in achieving the goals and expectations of its academic program. A robust counseling staff and intentional wellness curriculum further support student development.

In SPA's extensive student life programs, students find their passions, pursue new interests, and become leaders in areas that excite and engage them. Nearly 90% of Upper School compete on an SPA athletic team and more than 70% play an instrument, sing in a choir, or participate in one of the three annual theatrical productions. Most students are members of at least one of the many Upper School student clubs and organizations such as Upper School Council, *The Rubicon* student newspaper, math team, book club, or Science Alliance. SPA's Debate team is one of the best in the state, consistently winning Minnesota state titles and competing at the national and international level. As part of the requirement for graduation, every member of the senior class writes and delivers a speech to the entire Upper School community. The Senior Speech is one of the most significant and anticipated rites of passage at SPA.



CAMPUSES

SPA's two campuses are located just over two miles apart in St. Paul's Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. The Goodrich Campus is home to the Lower School (Grades K-5), and the Randolph Campus houses the Middle School (Grades 6-8) and Upper School (Grades 9-12).

Signature spaces on the Goodrich Campus include the cozy and inviting Living Room, the dedicated Lower School MakerSpace, the Converse Auditorium, and nearly five acres of open green space. Highlights of the Randolph Campus include the grade-level commons for each Middle School grade, the new Upper School Humanities Wing and Hugh K. Schilling Math and Science Center, the Huss Center for the Performing Arts, and the Harry M. Drake Gallery, which hosts exhibitions of student artwork and shows featuring local artists.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

St. Paul, the capital of Minnesota, adjoins Minneapolis on the west, and together they form the Twin Cities metropolitan area. St. Paul itself, situated in the southeastern part of the state, lies along a deep S-shaped bend of the Mississippi and is built on a series of bluffs rising from the river to the surrounding plains. Nature is an integral part of the city's identity: eight lakes are located wholly or partially within the municipal boundaries. St. Paul is a major education, health care, and industrial center, and companies manufacturing everything from medical devices to adhesives call the city home.

The distinct urban cultures of St. Paul and Minneapolis offer a rich and diverse area with dramatic skylines, exciting professional sports, award-winning theater, notable restaurants, and a thriving craft beer scene. The Twin Cities boasts more theater seats per capita than any U.S. city except New York,



and its nightclubs and live music venues (headlined by the famous First Avenue) are legendary. Foodies enjoy the wide range of Twin Cities restaurants and chefs, which are often featured on various Food Network shows, and sports fans can cheer on Minnesota's professional sports teams: the Minnesota Vikings (NFL), the Minnesota Wild (NHL), the Minnesota Twins (MLB), the Minnesota Timberwolves (NBA), and the four-time WNBA champion Minnesota Lynx. Families and visitors also enjoy the Minnesota Children's Museum, Como Park Zoo & Conservatory (the nation's oldest free zoo), and the Science Museum of Minnesota.

The Twin Cities enjoys four splendid seasons. From spring through autumn, Minnesotans enjoy canoeing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, hiking, and fishing on the abundant lakes and rivers in the region. During the winter, Minnesotans enjoy alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, and pond hockey among other sports. All year round, residents of Minneapolis and St. Paul take advantage of the area's renowned park system, which includes 52 parks and 340 miles of interconnected trails. Popular with residents and visitors alike, the Twin Cities' regional parks boast more than 47 million visits every year—even more than the famed Mall of America, one of the nation's largest shopping destinations, located near the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport in suburban Bloomington.

SCHOOL STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This is a most promising moment for St. Paul Academy and Summit School. Over the past decade, energized by the school's mission "to shape the hearts and minds of the people who will change the world," the entire SPA community has contributed to impressive growth and accomplishment in every dimension of this venerable and beloved school. The faculty and student body are dynamic, talented, industrious, and innovative. And in a warm and unpretentious environment where "people are striving to see each other clearly. . . and you are valued for who you are," teachers and students are partners



in a joint effort of discovery, not only to discern the profound lessons in the various subject areas of the curriculum, but also to learn “how to live one’s life.” An institution that believes in the pursuit of excellence in all things, SPA also fervently embraces the education of the whole child, and is a place where, in the words of a faculty member, “the inherent joy of learning shines through on a daily basis.” In such a vibrant and transformative atmosphere, it is no surprise that fundraising has also flourished. Some \$60M have been given toward the enhancement of SPA’s campus, leading to an award-winning renovation of the Upper School, the creation of the visionary Schilling Center for Math and Science, and the advent of the gorgeous Huss Center of the Performing Arts. The school is in a strong financial position, consistently operating at full capacity with a waiting list for new students and with small annual budget surpluses. By any relevant measure, SPA today stands among the country’s most outstanding independent schools. The new Head of School will be well positioned to build on the success of the outgoing Head’s 15-year legacy, in partnership with a strong and supportive Board of Trustees. The Board expects the next Head of School to maintain the school’s current momentum while remaining true to SPA’s mission and values and focusing on the following opportunities and challenges:

- Every school in the country has experienced significant disruption and stress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The incoming Head will have the opportunity to lead the community in reflection regarding the lessons of the pandemic: What has been gained and lost over the preceding two years? What must be restored, rebuilt, and renewed? How might SPA lead the way in this next chapter for independent schools? The incoming Head must also focus on community-building, intentionally aligning and uniting the community after this period of disruption.
- SPA is deeply committed to strengthening its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its facets. The school’s Center for Intercultural Education is in the early stages of creating a DEI-specific strategic plan which will be developed and launched in the coming school year (2021-22). The implementation of this plan will be a key focal point for the new Head of School, in partnership with the Board, administration, faculty, and the SPA community. One key priority of the plan will be to build a teaching faculty that more closely reflects the diversity of the Twin Cities.



- While SPA has long had an extensive program in physical education and athletics, there is considerable interest in developing a clearer definition of the identity and direction of athletics at SPA. How do the athletic program and its facilities fit into the school's culture of excellence and harmonize with its educational mission? What is the path forward to optimizing the athletics experience in the years ahead? What changes are needed to the school's athletic facilities in order to meet the school's athletic goals?
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- The Twin Cities constitute one of the most dynamic metropolitan areas in the U.S., with remarkable cultural and educational assets. This would seem to be a timely moment for the school to assess how it engages the greater St. Paul and Minneapolis communities. Are there more extensive ways in which the school can use its resources to help make a difference for the better? How might the SPA take advantage of opportunities in the local community to give students hands-on experience in "changing the world" right in their own community?
- The Lower School building on the Goodrich Campus is a cherished landmark, the former home of the Summit School for Girls, and the present-day home of growth and learning for SPA's youngest students. Handsome, historic, and hallowed as it is, some of the Lower School building's systems need to be modernized and a number of spaces should be upgraded or expanded. The school has done a wonderful job improving campus facilities on the Randolph Campus, and addressing the Lower School's needs will be an important step in providing state-of-the-art facilities for all students.
- In March 2019, the school published its [Strategic Plan 2025](#). The incoming Head will need to re-engage with the work of this plan post-COVID, designing opportunities for students to even more fully embrace their potential as changemakers.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Successful candidates will have an advanced degree and background and skills that include most or all of the following:

Professional Qualifications

- Significant experience leading and managing adults in complex organizations and a deep appreciation for the challenges and opportunities associated with a K-12 independent school community.
- Personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the requisite skillfulness to support student and faculty growth in this area and to facilitate critical conversations in the design of more inclusive curricula and programs.
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills necessary to manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy; a skillful and sensitive approach to change.
- Strong understanding of the business and operations dimensions of an independent school, including finance, admissions, communications, and development.
- An enthusiastic relationship-builder, willing to participate fully in the fundraising work of the school.
- Experience identifying, hiring, motivating, evaluating, and retaining excellent administrators, faculty, and staff.
- A student of leadership, with experience nurturing and developing talent and the confidence to delegate effectively to a strong senior leadership team.

Leadership Style and Personal Qualities

- A passion for academic excellence and appreciation for the life of the mind.
- A style that is collaborative when possible and decisive when necessary, built on approachability, responsiveness, and transparent communication.
- Problem-solver; willingness to take thoughtful risks.
- The confidence and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate with inspiration and clarity.
- Eagerness to engage actively with employees, students, parents, and community members and maintain visibility in the day-to-day life of the school.

TO APPLY

Candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position.
- A current resumé.

Selected candidates will be asked to provide additional information, including responses to Writing Prompts and a list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission).

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a resume and cover letter to:

Bill Christ

Senior Consultant

bill.christ@carneysandoe.com

Marsha Little

Search Consultant

marsha.little@carneysandoe.com