



**Position Statement**  
**Head of School**  
**Doane Academy**

**Burlington, New Jersey**  
**Start Date: July 1, 2023**

# Doane Academy

Head of School

POSITION STATEMENT | START DATE: JULY 1, 2023

DOANE  
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## OVERVIEW

Doane Academy is “a community where all are known, loved, and strongly encouraged to discover their unique potential.” For 185 years, Doane Academy has served central New Jersey with this profound idea, now explicitly expressed in its mission statement, at the core of its identity and culture. An independent day school founded in the Episcopal tradition, which integrates the physical, social, academic, and spiritual development of the whole student, Doane is open to all faiths. The school serves students from age 3 through grade 12, operating as three divisions (lower, middle and upper schools). The current enrollment is 253. Small by intention and design, Doane is a warm, deeply caring place, embracing and practicing notions such as the essential centrality of close relationships, as well as social and emotional learning, since long before such buzzwords were common in educational parlance.

While Doane Academy has experienced many challenges in its lengthy history, the school is currently healthy and financially stable. Headships at the school in recent decades, including the current remarkable tenure of George Sanderson, have been long and productive, providing the school with fundamental stability and a firm underpinning of endowment. Yet Doane does not sit in the middle of a wealthy suburb of a major metropolitan area. Rather, the school serves a remarkably diverse population and is distinctive both for the generosity of its financial assistance and for the exceptional range of families in its community. Indeed, the school’s entire history has been distinguished by emphasis on equity. The academic program is rich, inspired, and creative, yet attentive to the basics, ensuring that students leave well prepared for high achievement at the college and university level. The athletic and

co-curricular programs provide broad opportunities for students to experiment in new areas, be deeply involved in the life of the school, and to explore their talents and interests.

Doane Academy is emerging from the pandemic in sound condition, albeit with the need to discover its new “normal” in this era while returning to its traditions. The physical plant, magnificently located above the banks of the Delaware River (17 miles north of Philadelphia), conveys a sense of tradition and is now poised for further innovation and exploration of its myriad possibilities for the future. More than any other place of learning, the school embodies a spirit of family and connection. The challenges for Doane in the future are numerous, and yet that work will surely be exhilarating and rewarding.

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## OUR MISSION

“Doane Academy, an independent Episcopal day school, ages 3 through 12th grade, provides an exceptional college preparatory program while cultivating character development and nurturing the emotional maturity essential in preparing students for life.

We develop intelligent, capable individuals within a community where all are known, loved, and strongly encouraged to discover their unique potential.”

## OUR CORE VALUES

- **Academic Excellence.** Doane Academy encourages development of the highest standards of knowledge, inquiry, creative expression and academic success.
- **Character.** Doane Academy inspires integrity and responsibility for improving the lives of others.
- **Diversity.** A diverse community sharing different ideas, beliefs and cultures, strengthens Doane Academy.
- **Faith.** Doane Academy is a multi-faith community inspired by the Episcopal values of love and service, providing members the opportunity to reflect on their relationship with God.
- **Fellowship.** Doane Academy is a family. Every member of the community is nurtured and supported with love, compassion, and respect.
- **Leadership.** Doane Academy believes that good leaders are those who inspire and work with others in achieving extraordinary goals.
- **Social Responsibility.** Doane Academy encourages members of our community to behave ethically and with sensitivity toward social, cultural, economic and environmental issues.



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## GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of Doane Academy. This group of men and women hold the school in trust and are the financial stewards of the institution. While respecting the limits of their role relative to day-to-day operations, Doane trustees are mission-driven and responsive to the current challenges on campus. They are also forward-thinking and strategic.

There are currently 17 voting trustees drawn from both the Doane Academy community and beyond in an effort to maintain balance among Doane alumni, parents, and the greater community. Trustees meet five times during the year with a remote option if they are not local. They serve three-year renewable terms.

The Board includes seven standing committees (Executive, Finance, Development, Buildings and Grounds, Committee on Trustees, Head Relations, and Strategic Planning). Committees are required to meet twice annually but, in reality, meet more regularly. The Executive committee meets more often. The Board will occasionally form ad hoc committees, as needed. The Board of Trustees adheres to the NAIS Principles of Good Practice in all its deliberations.

## OUR HISTORY

In 1836, the 37-year-old Right Reverend George Washington Doane, second Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey, purchased a large three-story building in Burlington, on the banks of the Delaware River.

Bishop Doane transformed it into an Episcopal boarding school for girls, which he called Saint Mary's Hall. It would be the first such school to educate young girls on an equal footing with the best of boys' schools.

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The academic education of girls in the early 19th century was nearly non-existent, except for some private finishing schools which taught girls “proper” behavior in society and some domestic skills. Bishop Doane realized that women truly are “the corners of the temple” and that they could, with serious academic education, wisely influence the character of young people, as well as their husbands and others, and hence the future of the nation. It was a revolutionary concept, and one that was scoffed-at in some newspaper editorials of the time.

Bishop Doane raised capital for the new school by issuing shares of stock. A severe financial depression hit the United States just as St. Mary's Hall was opening and the money needed to run the school dried up. Saint Mary's Hall

carried on though, financed mainly through the personal funds of Eliza Green Perkins Doane, Bishop Doane's wife. She dedicated the whole of a \$9,500 annual dowry, received from the estate of her late first husband, to the bishop's vision, and saved the school.

Over the years St. Mary's Hall grew in stature and reputation, resulting in large enrollments in the middle of the 19th Century. By the start of the 20th Century, new buildings were added to the campus, Odenheimer and Scarborough Halls among them, as well as new academic, cultural, and athletic programs. The school enjoyed relative prosperity for several decades.

By 1953, however, the number of boarding students was in steady

decline, and the decision was made to change from a boarding school to a country day school. In 1966, a separate boys' school named Doane Academy was opened, and by 1974, the schools became a unified coeducation college preparatory school. In 2008, the school's legal name became “Doane Academy.”

Under the recent leadership of John McGee and George Sanderson, the school gained new momentum and achieved tremendous progress, attracting the philanthropic support of the Susquehanna and Rowan Family Foundations. Gifts from these and other sources have created a substantial endowment and made possible the construction of Rowan Hall, the centerpiece of the school completed in 2015.



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## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Doane is best known for providing Pre-K through Grade 12 students with a rigorous college preparatory program with a strong emphasis on leadership and character development. The school offers rich and varied curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs, including 17 Advanced Placement courses and 11 Honors courses. From Engineering Mechanics to Introduction to Filmmaking, Doane students can also pursue in greater depth specialized subjects in which they are interested. There are 17 interscholastic athletic teams and a deep commitment to the arts.

Middle and Upper School students are all assigned their own advisor, a faculty member dedicated to supporting their academic and personal growth.

Doane classrooms are exciting learning environments where students are engaged, challenged, and encouraged in part because the classes themselves are small. The average class size in the Lower School is 11, in the Middle School is 16, and in the Upper School is 12. The student-teacher ratio is 7:1. These small class sizes and low student-teacher ratios allow gifted and dedicated teachers to form close and trusting relationships with their students and to accommodate their unique personality and learning needs. Students find their teachers accessible and approachable. Teachers also communicate with caregivers on a regular basis (formally and informally) in order to form a working relationship in the education of the student.

Doane also offers a wide array of clubs and associations that mirror the diversity of the school's students and their interests. Students have the chance to participate in collaborative engineering projects, deliver closing arguments in



mock trials, organize community service efforts, and much more. Clubs provide unique ways for students to connect their academic studies with real world applications as well as devote additional time and energy to activities that bring them joy. Clubs are led by students to the fullest extent possible.

You can explore these exceptional educational programs more thoroughly by division on the Doane Academy website at: <https://www.doaneacademy.org/academics>.

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## FACILITIES AND FUNDRAISING

Doane Academy, nestled in the western side of the historic City of Burlington, sits on a 13-acre riverfront campus with six main buildings. It includes among its structures three buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the chapel (1847) which is noted as the first Neo-Gothic church structure built in the United States. Among its other buildings are a dedicated and recently updated science building, a gymnasium, and also an English manor house styled dining hall, theater space, a lower school library, and many flexible classroom spaces.

At the center of the campus, the newest building, Rowan Hall (2015), dominates. With a façade modeled after the Georgian-style building that housed the school in its early years, Rowan Hall includes a dozen state-of-the-art-classrooms, two student resource centers, administrative offices, and an expansive and inviting lobby with comfortable seating areas and a grand piano. This newer building includes green technology in that it is largely heated and cooled by its own geothermal plant.

In the fall of 2019 Doane Academy acquired a property with two lots associated with the former Elias Boudinot Elementary School. These parcels are contiguous to Doane's campus and are a

natural fit for its expansion. The acquisition reunited Doane with land that had previously been a part of its campus; the school had decided to sell the land to the City of Burlington in 1955. The campus also includes two regulation soccer fields, a baseball field, a softball field, and a natural space, called "Discovery Woods," where younger students regularly spend hands-on time learning about the natural world around them.

Doane has approximately \$30 million in endowment. The school raised \$3.2 million over the course of the 2020-2021 school year and raised approximately \$233,000 with its Annual Fund. Toward the annual fund, 100% of the Trustees and 93% of the faculty/staff made contributions as did 48% of the parents and 14% of the alumni/ae. Doane development activities and events for the purpose of cultivation included a summer golf outing, homecoming tailgate, fall donors' recognition cocktail party and Founder's Day activities. The school anticipates a comprehensive capital campaign in the near future.



## ADMISSION AND COLLEGE PLACEMENT

Doane currently enrolls 253 students from a total of 56 cities and towns in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In the 2020-2021 school year, 51% of enrolled students received need-based financial aid and 53% of Doane students self-identified as students of color. The school seeks to attract curious learners, who strive to impact the community and the world beyond. While taking pride in the rigor of the academic and extracurricular programs, Doane also values each student's character development. The goal is to inspire Doane students to discover their unique potential and to define their personality and character. The school encourages students to be significant - to add value to the people and places in their lives.

Doane graduates enroll in renowned colleges and universities across the country and, more importantly, flourish at even the most rigorous of them as a result of their academic preparation, their character, and their experience as inveterate contributors on campus. The Director of College Counseling serves as an advocate and resource for Upper School students as they prepare for the college application process. The Director guides each student through the process of knowing themselves well and, as a result, identifying colleges for which they are well suited. Doane offers college and career preparation classes for juniors and seniors, though families are encouraged to begin thinking about college before that.



## TRADITIONS

For 185 years, Doane students have been bound together across centuries and generations by important traditions, some of which have been in place since the school's founding in 1837. These traditions are an essential way of linking current students to the alumni to whom the community is indebted. These traditions include but are not limited to the following:

- **First Day of School:** Doane begins the school year in a way that is profoundly meaningful and joyous. The entire school community, including students, faculty, family, alumni, and members of the board of trustees, gather on the bank of the Delaware River to celebrate the start of the new school year and welcome the members of the senior class as they arrive by canoe for the first day of school.
- **Rocks, Roots, and Wings:** Inspired by the well-known Outward Bound program, this signature orientation initiative for middle and upper school students at the start of the academic year is designed to create bonding experiences and facilitate the development of leadership skills in an environment that pushes

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students beyond their usual comfort zones. Overnight trips to sites of historic, natural, and cultural significance expand student horizons, build self-confidence, and enhance educational and emotional maturity.

- **School Families:** In a program to create opportunities to interact across all grade levels, students from the lower through upper schools are placed into one of thirteen “families,” led by faculty members who serve as “parents.” Remaining in the same family over the years enables the creation of friendships that grow, evolve, and deepen as families meet, share activities, celebrate holidays together, and look beyond self to the wider Doane community.
- **Doane's Dungeon:** Started by Upper School students in the 1980s, Doane’s Dungeon gives a literary twist to the traditional Halloween haunted house. Scary, spooky, and

Shakespearean, the event turns the basement and corridors of the historic school into a haunted dungeon.

- **Christmas Mystery:** Originated in 1848 by St. Mary’s Hall boarding students who were unable to travel home for the holidays, the Christmas Mystery is a play celebrating the birth of Jesus. Performed word for word as it was written (the current script dates from 1930), the Christmas Mystery is one of our most beloved traditions.
- **Founder's Day Weekend:** An alumni celebration of the school’s founder, Bishop George Washington Doane, and his enduring, revolutionary vision of providing educational opportunities to young women takes place every May. A weekend long series of events inspires alumni to relive their days at Doane alongside their longtime friends and share their stories with current students.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The next Head of School at Doane Academy should be prepared to collaborate with a forward-thinking and devoted Board of Trustees, senior administrative team, faculty, and staff to fulfill Doane's mission and to lead Doane wisely and boldly into the future, by embracing current challenges and seizing new opportunities. These challenges and opportunities include but are not limited to the following:

- Build upon the school's impressive list of achievements in recent years while sharing a clear and compelling vision for the future.
  - Steward the school's most significant benefactors while inspiring an enduring culture of philanthropy in support of current capital endeavors.
  - Define an identity and direction for a coherent K-12 academic program while considering whom the school best serves.
  - Promote the professional growth and development of the current faculty while recruiting, rewarding, and retaining talent.
  - Restore the pre-Covid 19 traditions and cultural norms including a clear and equitable disciplinary process while recommitting to the pre-Covid 19 sense of community between and among faculty and staff, students, parents, and alumni.
  - Realize the current plans to erect a new fieldhouse while repurposing the old gymnasium into whole-community space.
- Maintain the school's historical commitment to the Episcopal tradition while nurturing the commitment of the school to the importance of both faith and a diverse community.
  - Seek and support an increasingly diverse faculty while encouraging the sense of belonging among an already highly diverse student body.
  - Support those with creative ideas for auxiliary programming that will serve both to introduce potential faculty or students to the school and as alternative sources of revenue.
  - Strengthen the school's admission profile by enhancing the name recognition and reputation of the school in the greater Burlington region.
  - Consider opportunities to expand and increase co-curricular and extracurricular activities, including community service, to maintain character and leadership development as a priority equal to academic achievement.



## KEY QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES

The successful candidate to be Head of School at Doane Academy will be a mission and values-driven leader who will embody and demonstrate most, if not all, of the following skills, qualities, characteristics, and experiences:

- Demonstrated success as a visionary and inspirational educator.
  - Ability to serve as a visible presence who knows the names of colleagues and students, and an active listener with a collaborative nature.
  - Breadth of experience in schools and familiarity with every area of school life.
  - Personal integrity, high emotional intelligence and inspirational character, along with warmth, energy, enthusiasm, and a sense of humor.
  - Capacity to serve as an ethical and transparent role model for administrators, faculty, staff, and students, and call on others to be their best selves in a community.
  - Significant training and experience with building and supporting diverse, equitable and inclusive communities.
  - Talent for identifying, selecting, and retaining outstanding administrators and teachers as well as supervising and developing them and encouraging their professional growth.
  - Ability to forge authentic relationships with a wide range of people both within the constituencies of the school and externally, including parents, alumni, and others.
  - Experience as a strategic thinker.
  - Strength as a community builder.
- Superb oral and written communication skills.
  - Financial acumen, fund-raising experience, an entrepreneurial spirit, and a record of ambitious and data-driven change.
  - Willingness to lead in alignment with the mission, values and history of the school.

## TO APPLY

Doane Academy retained the firm Resource Group 175 (RG 175) to support its search for a new Head of School. If you wish to submit your application, please do so at: <https://rg175.com/candidates/signup>

Application includes:

- Letter of interest (cover letter)
- Resume or CV
- Personal statement (educational/leadership philosophy)
- One other writing sample of your choice
- Name of four current references and contact information (optional)

The **deadline** for receipt of full application materials is **Monday, July 11, 2022**.

Please note that the Doane Academy Search Committee intends to interview semi-finalist candidates in-person on **Wednesday, August 3 and potentially Thursday, August 4 if necessary**. Finalists will be invited to visit campus in September. Please plan accordingly.

For any questions or further information about the position, please contact:

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