



TOWER SCHOOL
Marblehead, Massachusetts

HEAD OF SCHOOL
Start Date: July 2023
towerschool.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES



MISSION

We teach our students to think critically and creatively, to develop joyful curiosity, to embrace challenge and apply their knowledge with confidence, and to thrive within a community rich with diverse perspectives and talents.

Visit [Mission in Action](#) to see how Tower brings its mission to life for students each day.

OVERVIEW

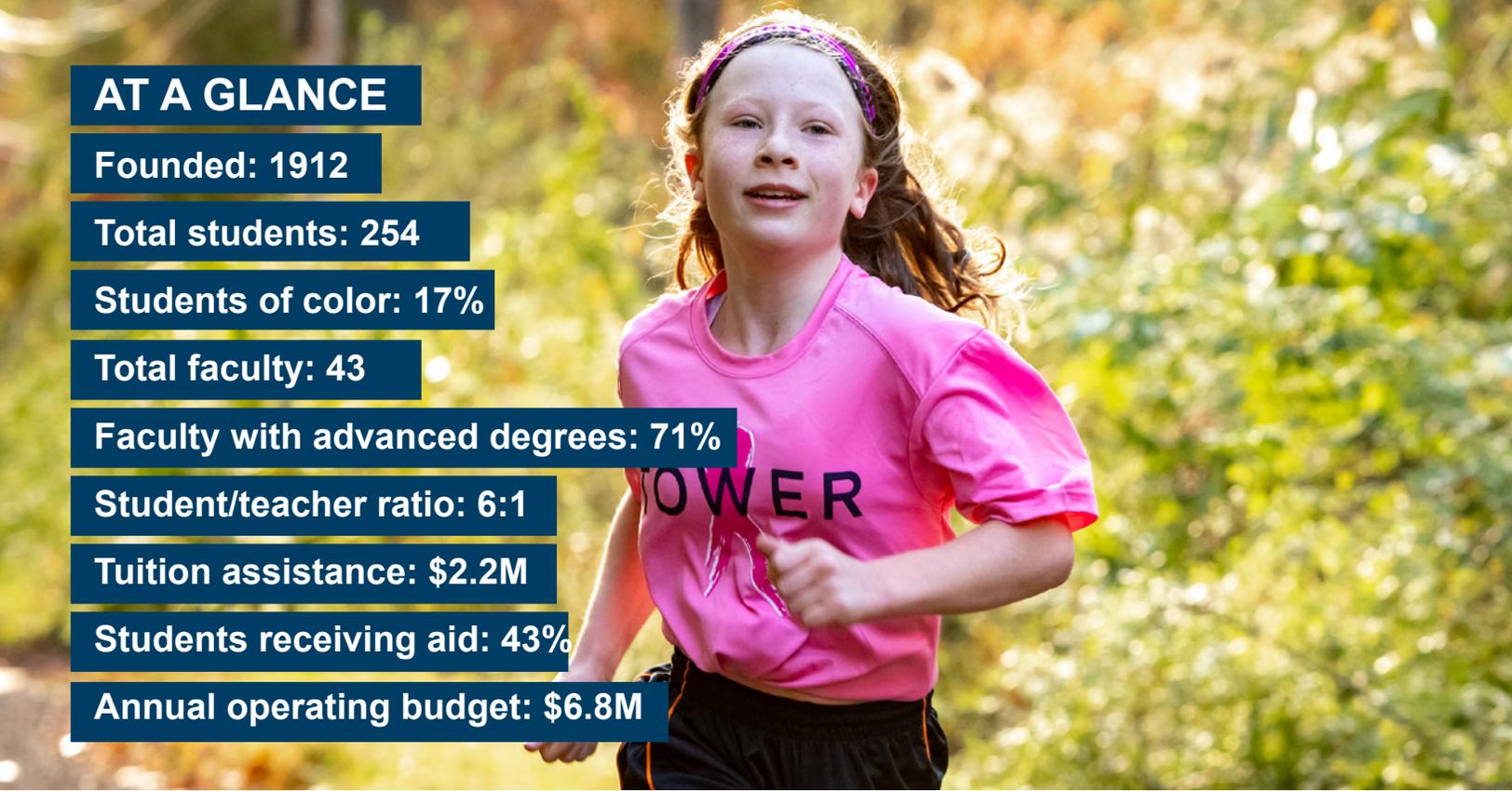
Founded in 1912, Tower School is an independent, co-educational day school for students in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8. Tower has a long history of offering its students an extraordinary academic educational program that emphasizes the social, emotional, and physical growth of its students from the earliest years through adolescence.

Led by an experienced, talented, and dedicated faculty, Tower School's academic and student-life programs provide the highest quality of preparation for secondary school and college. Tower is committed to fostering creative and critical thinkers who fully embrace challenges, apply their knowledge with confidence, and thrive within a community rich with diverse perspectives and talents.

Tower seeks a dynamic leader as its next Head of School to start in July 2023. The successful candidate will be an experienced leader in education who has the capacity and vision to build on Tower's strengths and propel it to new levels of success. As the School's academic leader and administrator, the Head of School is responsible for maintaining a rigorous and innovative curriculum, an environment for educational excellence, strong communication with the community, and a mutual respect among students, faculty, and staff.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Tower School was founded by Adeline Tower, who welcomed her first students in 1912, making Tower one of the oldest independent schools in the Boston area. Tower's colleague, Helen Runnette, took the helm in 1917 and, for forty years, continued her predecessor's tradition of forward-thinking education. Runnette and Tower shared the philosophy that, *"Discipline of one's self was the keynote, plus freedom to advance one's own ideas and create new patterns of understanding in the subjects of the curriculum."*



AT A GLANCE

Founded: 1912

Total students: 254

Students of color: 17%

Total faculty: 43

Faculty with advanced degrees: 71%

Student/teacher ratio: 6:1

Tuition assistance: \$2.2M

Students receiving aid: 43%

Annual operating budget: \$6.8M

Adeline Tower and Helen Runnette believed in educating each child to their greatest potential. The Tower curriculum included academic disciplines crucial to a comprehensive education. But Runnette also stressed the importance of art, drama, and hands-on learning. Students often took field trips to farms, museums, and factories. Runnette explained: *“More than saying twelve times three, more than learning to spell, more than learning ‘amo, amas, amat,’ are the fundamentals of learning how to think, how to apply one’s knowledge, how to live with one’s fellows, [and] how to develop one’s self into an efficient member of society.”*

Runnette’s and Tower’s core values, encompassing educational philosophy and community expectations, are as relevant today as they were in 1912.

THE SCHOOL

Tower School provides a stimulating child-centered environment which embraces childhood and emphasizes creativity while preparing its students for the future. Tower uses a division head model, which provides a high level of expertise, support, energy and focus that serves the community well. All students are known and needed. They are confident because they are known, and they are motivated because they are needed – whether in the classroom, in a project, or on the field. The School strives to develop lifelong strategic learners who will continue to ask questions and solve problems. Tower accomplishes this by making learning enjoyable, joyful, and engaging so that even when the period of formal school learning ends, students continue to seek out answers and build upon the foundation Tower School has provided. Students exit Tower School as confident, self-motivated learners eager to continue developing strong leadership skills, engage in academic success, and create opportunities to contribute meaningfully within their communities and the world.



Consistent with the School's mission, Tower students thrive within a community rich with diverse perspectives and talents. Tower values the diversity within its vibrant community and does not discriminate based on ethnicity, faiths, orientation, gender identity, family structure, and socio-economic backgrounds.

In efforts to uphold its mission and reputation for educating generations of students of extraordinary character and scholarship, Tower School thoughtfully charted its future and launched its [strategic plan](#) in 2019. The plan focuses on four key initiatives: Academic Leadership, Tower's Intentional Culture, Community Impact and Partnership, and a Thriving Future.

ACADEMICS

Tower's commitment to academic excellence is rooted in a unique educational philosophy that stresses critical and creative thinking. It is an approach that develops well-rounded children who thrive through creative exploration and expression.

The strength of the curriculum, the joy in classrooms, and the performance of students are three things about which the School is most proud. Tower is an academic community committed to excellence.



Lower School Program (Pre-K –Grade 4)

As Tower’s mission states:

“We teach our students to think critically and creatively, to develop joyful curiosity...”

Throughout the Lower School experience, the program is designed to inspire children’s natural excitement for learning. As students secure foundational skills and advance through the grades, the curriculum challenges them with an increased emphasis on problem solving and higher-level critical thinking skills.

“...to embrace challenge and apply that knowledge with confidence...”

Tower is ambitious for students. Teachers know curriculum, best practice, and children. Whether it’s mastering geography skills, participating in a collaborative science experiment, completing an independent reading project, or demonstrating solid procedural knowledge in a challenging multi-step math problem, students embrace the challenge that teachers provide. Confident in their learning, students are prepared to advocate for themselves and reach beyond their comfort zones.

“...and to thrive within a community rich with diverse perspectives and talents.”

Social learning is an important aspect of the Lower School experience. Tower teachers understand and guide children’s broadening perception of the world. Understanding and working with difference is a crucial academic skill and builds sophistication. Human interactions over real behaviors lead to deeper learning. Through age-appropriate processing of social issues and a strong home/school connection, Lower School students contribute meaningfully to their communities and the world. Students work with determination and joy. Teachers set high expectations and help students to attain their own personal levels of excellence. By the end of the fourth grade, Tower students are confident in their academic and social skills, understand themselves as learners, and are connected to the Tower community and beyond.



Middle School Program (Grades 5–8)

Tower’s Middle School students learn in an exciting environment of challenge, increased academic rigor, new opportunities, and broader responsibilities. As early adolescents, these students are at an important point along their educational path—a time when connection and challenge encourage personal and academic growth.

As Tower’s mission states:

“We establish a sense of belonging.”

Students are known and deeply cared for by the teachers and advisors who lead their learning and support them through the challenges that the rigorous academic program presents. When students have deep relationships of trust with their teachers, they perform at optimal levels.

Students also feel deeply connected with one another. They live by the Tower Code which champions qualities of respect, helpfulness, and kindness. The Middle School is a place where relationships and character are critical components for establishing learning relationships for students.

“We prepare students for future success.”

With foundational academic skills secured in Lower School, Middle School students embrace an ambitious academic program. Whether it is mastering the skills of algebra, engaging in historical research and evidence-based reasoning, writing, conversing in Spanish, or mastering the processes of observation and experimentation in science, students apply their academic and study skills with confidence.



They are adept with the tools and strategies—note taking, research, test preparation, effective study habits—for success at the most selective secondary schools and highly ranked public high schools.

“We provide opportunities for students to identify themselves as innovators, leaders, contributors, artists, and athletes.”

Early adolescents need opportunities to excel, to take initiative, and to use their voice. Tower provides these through the classroom and through athletic, social, and community-service programs.

In the classroom, students lead the charge with debate, discussion, teamwork, and questioning; they learn to self-advocate and to use their teachers and resources proactively to further their own learning. On the field, students lead athletic teams as captains or veteran players. Students impact school life through student government, as editors of the literary magazine, and as environmental stewards, to name a few. Through the service program, students lead with character and heart to contribute to a wide range of local organizations.

There is no shortage of opportunities for every student to practice taking initiative and using their skill and voice in meaningful ways.

Tower has high expectations for Middle School students. The School knows that establishing a strong foundation of academic skills, character, and confidence now will ensure that students are ready for any secondary school experience. Moreover, Tower knows that this foundation will have a lasting and positive effect over the course of a lifetime.



THE ARTS AND ATHLETICS

Tower School recognizes the importance of integrating arts into the daily curriculum. Allowing students the freedom to express themselves and explore their imaginations is part of a well-rounded education. The visual and performing arts don't simply augment the curriculum; they are a central part of a Tower School education. Students have opportunities to explore their creative gifts in a number of ways at every age. Every student learns to read music and has the chance to perform in theatrical productions while learning to appreciate the talents of others.

In Middle School, the arts curriculum moves from traditional art programs to deeper levels of artistic exploration and creation. Students spend more time on a few areas of interest in order to gain a fuller grasp of a subject and become confident in their abilities as artists. Tower's Arts Block program provides middle school students with opportunities in technology, visual arts and musical arts classes. Recent Arts Block trimester offerings include: handbells, photography, woodworking, oil painting, technology, jazz band, marimbas, clay, sculpture, video, chorus, part singing, unaccompanied voice work, multi-cultural works, a cappella and folk groups. In addition, 6, 7 and 8 graders have an option to participate in the winter musical.

The integration of physical education and athletics into a Tower School education reinforces the School's goal of educating the whole child. Students gain the benefits of physical activity while also developing crucial skills such as leadership and teamwork as well as learning the importance of dedication. Younger students enjoy strengthening fine motor skills and learning the basics of specific sports. Starting in sixth grade, students have the opportunity to play on competitive teams including soccer, cross-country, basketball, and lacrosse.



SCHOOL LIFE

Life outside the academic classroom is just as vibrant as it is inside of it at Tower School. The community is close-knit and tied together by threads of respect, kindness, and honesty. Programs and service learnings are offered to develop skills, build friendships, and foster talents.

Students grow in leadership and respect, build character, and gain new perspectives about themselves and their world around them through community service opportunities. Tower encourages participation in service and provides resources and opportunities for students of all ages to participate, whether as part of a service-learning aspect of a class or in an extra-curricular capacity. Regardless of the setting, students gain invaluable lessons and experiences which contribute to their overall development as responsible and caring citizens.

Lower School students are provided an extensive curricular and cultural enrichment program throughout the school year. Guest speakers, educators, and performers offer students a glimpse of cultures from across the world, and introduce them to fascinating professions, and unique forms of artistic expression. Middle School students have opportunities to participate in student government, interscholastic athletics, clubs, as well as educational class trips including environmental, team building, and a capstone eighth grade trip to Washington DC.

Beyond the classroom students have unique relationships with teachers and administrators through advisory and mentoring relationships. Students feel known and needed with multiple touch points for guidance.



CAMPUS

Tower School's 65,000 square-foot facility is situated on 8 acres of land within walking distance to the harbor. The school's Backyard (renovated in 2018) is a premiere outdoor environment, designed to enhance Tower's athletic and science programs. The Backyard includes an outdoor classroom adjacent to the wetlands, a new greenhouse centered on native teaching gardens, two new playgrounds, a community gathering space and a state-of-the-art, sustainable turf athletic field—made of fully recyclable and compostable materials. An outdoor swimming pool is available for summer camp use. The 4,207 square-foot, sun-filled, 5 bedroom, Head of School House (built in 2015) overlooks the backyard.

School facilities include a performing arts center, two visual arts classrooms, a woodworking studio, two music classrooms, a gymnasium, three science labs, a well-equipped technology classroom and a large home base for a robust extended day program.

MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS

Marblehead is a picturesque coastal town located 18 miles north of Boston. The town began as a fishing village, exporting cod to the nearby city of Salem. During the time of the Revolutionary War, the residents and sailors of Marblehead are credited as predecessors of the U.S. Navy and were instrumental in helping the colonies' efforts in the War.

The historic, bustling town is home to nearly 20,000 residents. Visitors and residents enjoy Marblehead's restaurants, galleries, conservation land and trails, public parks and beaches, yacht clubs, kayaking, fishing, playgrounds, shops, music, theater, and an independent movie theater.

Learn more about Marblehead [here](#).



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Tower's next Head of School will be joining the community at an exciting time. Tower is known for academic excellence; a deeply-invested, growth-oriented faculty; and beautiful, well-equipped learning environment. The school is lead by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees and an experienced administrative team. Enrollment is stable—with promising growth opportunities in the newly articulated middle school (grades 5–8). The next Head of School will be charged to address the following priorities:

Sustain and Deepen the Sense of Community: The next head will have strong interpersonal communication skills and enjoy being present and engaged with all constituents, celebrating achievements and marking important passages within the community by bringing people together at community gatherings or reaching out with words of encouragement. The next head will ideally know and value every member of the Tower community.

Lead with conviction and integrity: Tower has thrived because of the dedication of everyone. Faculty and staff care deeply about the emotional well being and intellectual growth of the students; they also care deeply about each other. The next Head of School will embrace this type of supportive community while also championing a strong vision for the future of the school. Collaborative but also decisive, a team player who is inspiring, curious and excited to be a part of the day to day life of Tower.

Steward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Journey: Tower's next head of school will possess the sensitivity and acuity to guide the school's DEI work in a manner consistent with the School's Mission. Tower aspires to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. As with so many independent schools, members of the Tower community also have diverse views regarding these important issues. This will require the next leader to meet constituents where they are in order to create a safe environment for expressing diverse points of view and to have the ability to invite participation in nuanced conversations and resulting actions.



Educational excellence: Tower is committed to an outstanding educational program that is forward-looking, attentive to best practices in education, and incorporates attention to the whole child. There is an expectation that the next Head of School will have the intellectual curiosity and vision to lead the School to the right balance between tradition and innovation, including the strategic consideration and systematic implementation of new ideas and approaches.

DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Tower is an aspirational and caring community. As such, the community is looking for a visible and visionary leader, a strategic thinker, a collaborative team builder, and a skillful manager who can mobilize and direct the passion and commitment of the School community. Successful candidates will have a background and skills that include most or all of the following:

- Approachable, accessible and kind, embodying the “mayor of the village” role with a strong and joyful presence around campus and at school events;
- An excellent communicator who understands the value of listening with an open mind, encourages dialogue and models collaboration and reflection;
- A leader who embodies both humility and strength and articulates a shared vision of Tower’s work on behalf of its students;
- Genuine enjoyment at being an active and visible presence in the life of the school as a foundation for strong, supportive relationships with faculty and staff, thereby fostering a strong sense of community;
- An ability to think and act strategically to support and enhance the school’s program, finances, marketing, and enrollment;
- Conviction and the ability to articulate the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging;
- Exceptional communication skills, both in large settings as well as in smaller venues;
- An ability and commitment to work collaboratively and delegate effectively.



TO APPLY

Qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter that specifically focuses on this opportunity at Tower and expresses interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;

As the process moves forward, selected candidates may be asked to submit:

- Additional writing samples or responses to writing prompts;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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