



## **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR & DEAN OF CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

**[gogunn.org](http://gogunn.org) | Washington, CT**

The Frederick Gunn School, founded in 1850, is a co-ed boarding and day school for students in grades 9–12 as well as a post-graduate year. Mr. Gunn had a deep appreciation for the natural world, believing that in nature students understand themselves as humans and their place in the world. He took a principled stand against slavery and spurred students (and the town at large) to examine their beliefs. In addition to the habits and skills students will need in college and life beyond, we teach them to follow Mr. Gunn's example: to cultivate wisdom, to be trailblazers, to act with conviction, and to value character as highly as intellect and achievement.

Our continuous focus on moral character development intentionally engages all members of our school in the work of creating an inclusive and equitable living and learning ecosystem. Community and citizenship are at the heart of our aspiration to both social justice and academic excellence, with individual diversity integral to the strength of that community. When we embrace difference and pursue school life with respect, equity, and compassion, we build a foundation for engaged citizens.

In keeping with the tenets of our founder Frederick Gunn, who was himself a prominent abolitionist and progressive educator, The Frederick Gunn School seeks to provide a pluralistic learning environment for all inclusive of (but not limited to): culture, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, national origin, learning differences, physical difference, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic differences.

We invite applicants who resonate with our mission and who will foster an environment of cultural and intellectual richness and an active participant in advancing equity and inclusion.

### **Overview**

Frederick Gunn was an early champion of experiential education and of sports. In addition, he founded drama programs in the town of Washington alongside the school that bears his name. He knew that students' growth in school is expanded exponentially when they have experiences beyond the walls of the classroom. At The Frederick Gunn School, our co-curricular program represents a significant percentage of the student experience and we have worked to make sure that our afternoon programs are an extension of the learning that happens during the class day. Athletics comprise a significant percentage of the afternoon offerings. At the same time, we offer robust visual and performing arts programs as well as several wellness programs.

The title of this role reflects the shared importance of leading an ambitious athletic program while overseeing the entirety of the co-curricular program and ensuring that the whole of the program functions well and in alignment with the school's mission and values. The Athletic Director and Dean of Co-Curricular Programs is charged with ensuring mission consistency and effectiveness across The Frederick Gunn School's co-curricular departments and programs. The role involves thinking broadly and strategically about the school's mission, the core values of our co-curricular program, our history and traditions as a school, and our role within the landscape of boarding schools.

## **Specific Responsibilities**

- Facilitate the evolution of the co-curricular program such that it serves both current students and the market well.
- Oversee the Athletic Department, including the Assistant Athletic Director, athletic training staff, and Strength and Conditioning Coach(es).
- Manage schedules proactively and in consultation with coaches and all other constituencies who may be impacted (the faculty and student body, parents, alumni, the admissions office, the alumni and development office.)
- Facilitate the timely posting of athletic information to the website. This includes, but is not limited to, schedule changes and scores. Communicate schedule changes to all constituencies proactively.
- Coordinate with Admissions to determine viable long-term strategies for recruiting and Financial Aid allocation.
- Consult with the Dean of Faculty regarding co-curricular needs in the hiring process and, where appropriate, be involved in the interview process.
- Coordinate professional development of coaches and program leaders to further support the mission of the school and the core values of the co-curricular program.
- Be the primary point person for parent and faculty questions/concerns about co-curricular programs.
- Collaborate in the management and, where appropriate, renovation of co-curricular spaces.
- Lead regular meetings of a group of school administrators focused on the co-curricular program.
- Regularly meet with leaders of co-curricular programs.
- Coordinate with other programs/pillar leaders to identify areas of overlap and opportunities for collaboration.
- Ensure students are engaged every term in a co-curricular program, assisting those that are displaced from their first choice programs find good options.
- Manage students interested in Independent Projects, ensuring that those projects are done in the spirit of the program and are appropriate in number to protect the viability of other programs.
- In collaboration with the Dean of Students and Academic Dean, enforce and ensure the enforcement of the school rules as they pertain to co-curricular activities.
- Represent The Frederick Gunn School at league and association meetings, including but not limited to the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council.
- Collaborate with the Director of Health Services and the Athletic Trainer to oversee the safety of all athletes.

The Athletic Director & Dean of Co-Curricular Programs shall be a member of the school's Leadership Team and will report to the Associate Assistant Head of School.

## **Direct Reports**

- Assistant Athletic Director
- Athletic Trainer(s)
- Strength and Conditioning Coach(es)

## **Desired Qualifications**

The school's motto is "A good person is always learning" and candidates must see themselves as lifelong learners who hope to learn as much from the institution as they give to it. Qualified candidates will have experience leading students and colleagues in a secondary education.

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and some familiarity with boarding schools. More than anything, the Athletic Director and Dean of Co-Curriculars must relish being in the midst of student

and faculty life at a busy boarding school. Candidates should embrace the duality of a role that demands immersion in the details of running a large program while maintaining the vision and leadership to help that program evolve.

As an administrator at a boarding school, the Athletic Director and Dean of Co-Curriculars should expect to have a role in the Residential Life program and a role within our Co-curricular Program as a coach or program leader.

### **To Apply:**

This position is a 12-month, full-time, exempt opening. Salary is competitive, and the employment package consists of excellent benefits, including outstanding health and dental coverage and retirement plan. To apply, please send application materials to: [opdahls@frederickgunn.org](mailto:opdahls@frederickgunn.org). Application materials are being accepted now through January 31, 2025, and qualified applicants will be invited to interview. Candidacy for the position will be kept confidential through the initial rounds of the search. This position has a start date of July 1, 2025.

### **Application Materials:**

- Cover letter and resume
- References (up to four); References will not be contacted without prior permission.
- Written statement (choose one)
  - Option 1: Included are five Core Values that drive life and learning at The Frederick Gunn School. Describe how you might build and promote a co-curricular culture that reinforces these beliefs.
  - Option 2: Included are four Design Pillars around which the school is orienting its program. Reflect on how you have engaged these concepts as an educator and how you might champion them in our community.

*The Frederick Gunn School is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Except in cases of a bona fide occupational qualification or need, or except as otherwise permitted or required by law, The Frederick Gunn School does not discriminate against applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, intellectual disability, learning disability or physical disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, victims of domestic violence or any other protected class status under applicable law with respect to hiring, compensation, promotion, discharge from employment or other terms and conditions of employment. Position announcements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees assigned to the job title and the education and skills required. Descriptions are not intended to be a complete list of all responsibilities, duties and skills that are required or may be required in the future.*

*BACKGROUND SCREENING: The Frederick Gunn School conducts background checks on all job candidates upon acceptance of a contingent offer, which includes using a third-party administrator to conduct the checks.*

## **Core Values of The Frederick Gunn School**

*Integrated Humans:* Thriving people learn to integrate the intellectual, the physical, the spiritual, and the emotional through an examination of the place of each, discernment about their relative role, and a commitment to balance and flourishing.

*Hopeful Faculty:* We prize faculty who believe resiliently, optimistically and with good humor in the students' and faculty's collective ability to grow and learn; know their discipline and practice, and understand character development. A faculty oriented around these principles will earn the confidence of students and create a place of purpose and fun where faculty and students want to be.

*Learning Ecosystem:* Thriving communities recognize the interdependent nature of their parts. Therefore, The Frederick Gunn School is a school that champions the interdisciplinary and inter-experiential nature of life and learning – one that incorporates the outdoors, athletics, and arts, as well as academics, into everyday life.

*Moral Character Development:* We are a school that nurtures Mr. Gunn's belief in character as the driving force in a life well-lived, and that character emerges through the intentional pursuit—in knowledge and practice—of what is good, right, true, sustainable, and beautiful.

*Engaged Citizens:* The Frederick Gunn School is a school that, despite growing cultural apathy, cynicism, consumerism and distraction, produces people who care deeply – who become wise, engaged, active citizens.

## **Design Pillars at The Frederick Gunn School**

*A sense of rootedness and place:* Exemplified by Gunn Outdoors, a sense of rootedness and place is important for all FGS programs, as this exemplifies Frederick Gunn's instincts around place-based and experiential learning, a commitment to the natural world, instincts for sustainable living, and practical, life-skills outcomes for every Frederick Gunn student.

*Learning yourself and how to learn:* The key to 21st century skills is the work for each of our students to understand themselves as integrated human beings who are unique as individuals and as learners. Exemplified in our Center for Academic Excellence, these priorities are found through our advising program, in our Student Progress meetings, as well as in every single classroom at FGS.

*Public character and active citizenship:* The mission of the Frederick Gunn School is to form active citizens who will have a positive impact here on campus and out in the world. While they learn these principles explicitly through the Center for Citizenship and Just Democracy, we know that it takes an ecosystem of adults committed to this work to ensure this outcome for our students.

*Risk-taking and innovation:* Frederick Gunn's own entrepreneurial mindset is as relevant for our students in the twenty-first century as it was for his students in the nineteenth century. We expect that with the new Center for Innovation and Active Citizenship, which will house our Entrepreneurship Program alongside CJD and our IDEAS Lab, this mindset will be integrated into every one of our programs on campus, as we prepare our students to take risks and to be makers not consumers.