



Head of School Mentoring

434.295.9122
SouthernTeachers.com



SOUTHERN
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AGENCY

HEAD OF SCHOOL MENTORING

WHY HEAD OF SCHOOL MENTORING?

“No race has ever been won in the first corner (turn); many have been lost there,” states author Garth Stein. Armed, in most cases, with years of independent school experience, first-time Heads of Schools begin their new roles with an abundance of enthusiasm, energy, and determination to move their new schools to even greater heights – to draw on the many lessons they have learned along the way as they prepare for what will undoubtedly be a rewarding yet challenging professional endeavor. Like most endeavors, long-term success is dependent invariably on those actions taken during the initial phase of this engagement.

In the spring of 2021, based in part on survey results from 635 non-Head of School administrators, NAIS updated its previous State of Independent School Leadership Studies. Nearly a third of these administrators indicated they aspired to become heads of schools, which is 48% more than the 2009’s survey. Perhaps, most striking, however, was the small percentage of these aspiring heads of schools who felt “very prepared” to deal with many of the duties that require the Head of School’s attention, e.g., finances (15%), human resource issues (40%), fundraising (19%), legal issues (22%), and addressing/managing community polarization (29%).

New heads report sometimes experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation that come with being “in charge” and dealing with areas where they may be insufficiently prepared and/or overwhelmed by the stress associated with their demanding jobs. This is where working with a mentor can help new and short-tenured heads survive and thrive. Our mentors have not only served in a variety of administrative roles, but they have also transitioned to successful headships. This confidential and cost-effective relationship provides new heads with practical advice that is based on years of independent school experience. Additionally, this mentoring program can complement other professional development activities, e.g., the NAIS New Heads Institute.

WHAT TO EXPECT?

Southern Teachers has developed a comprehensive package to best support new and short-tenured Heads of Schools through this mentoring process. This includes meeting via video conferencing for fifteen (15) sessions spaced across the academic year. These sessions are projected to be 45-60 minutes in length, structured to address pre-determined agenda items while providing flexibility to discuss other areas of concern. To ensure our assistance is responsive and timely, our mentors are also available for brief conversations as necessary during this mentoring relationship.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Requests for training can be made to Rod Chamberlain at Consulting@SouthernTeachers.com. This will initiate a conversation that will address any questions by the school administration about the training process.





RICH GEHMAN

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EDUCATION

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
M.Ed. in Educational Policy, Research, and Administration

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ
B.A. cum laude in Sociology, Near Eastern Studies

EXPERIENCE

Southern Teachers Agency
Florida Search Consultant 2020-present

UCCG, Beijing, China
Education Consultant & Founding Head of School 2017-20

Oak Hall School, Gainesville, FL
Headmaster 1993-17

The Savannah Country Day School, Savannah, GA
Upper School Principal 1989-93

St. Luke's School, New Canaan, CT
Assistant Headmaster 1981-89
Head of Upper School and Teacher

Marathon House, Dublin, NH
Vermont Intake, Outreach Coordinator 1980
Educational, Vocational Coordinator 1978-80

Sar Cheshmeh American International School, Rafsanjan, Iran
Teacher 1976-78

"Iranzamin" Tehran International School, Tehran, Iran
Teacher 1975-76

HONORS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Florida Council of Independent Schools, Board of Directors, 1994-2011; President, 2005-2008; Executive Committee member; Accreditation Commission member
- Board of Directors, The Cornerstone School, Ocala, FL, 2011-2018
- Florida High School Athletic Association, Public Liaison Advisory Committee
- Gainesville Rotary Club, member and Chair of Speakers
- Princeton University Alumni Schools Committee





MIKE WAYLETT

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EDUCATION

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision

**University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, &
James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA**
Coursework in Business, Finance, and Mathematics

State University of New York College at Brockport, Brockport, NY
B.S. in Physical and Health Education

EXPERIENCE

Southern Teachers Agency
Financial Consultant 2020-present

Linden Hall, Lititz, PA
Head of School 2015-20

St. Anne's-Belfield School, Charlottesville, VA
Associate Head of School 1981-15
Associate Head of School for External Affairs
Assistant Head for External Affairs
Assistant to the Headmaster

HONORS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Commissioner for Accreditation, Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS)
- Accreditation chair for PAIS
- Speaker, Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS) workshops
- Contributing writer, VAIS Accreditation Manual
- Vice Chair of accreditation teams for five VAIS schools
- Past member, ASCD and NCTM
- Endowment Committee Chair and Finance Committee member, Aldersgate United Methodist Church
- Board of Directors and Finance Committee member, Camp Holiday Trails
- Board of Directors member, Tuckahoe School
- Albemarle County Reserve Deputy Sheriff





CYNTHIA WELDON-LASSITER

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EDUCATION

Columbia University, New York, NY
Ed.D. in Curriculum and Teaching

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
M.T. in Education

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
B.A. in Psychology

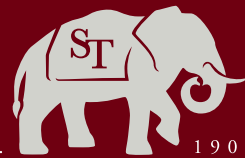
EXPERIENCE

Southern Teachers Agency <i>Consultant</i>	<i>2022-present</i>
St. Andrew's School, Richmond, VA <i>Head of School</i>	<i>2010-22</i>
Montclair Kimberley Academy, Montclair, NJ <i>Elementary Teacher, Grade-Level Chairperson</i>	<i>2007-10</i>
Columbia University, Teachers College, New York, NY <i>Research Assistant Fellowship</i>	<i>2004-08</i>
Montclair Kimberley Academy, Montclair, NJ <i>Elementary Teacher, Grade-Level Chairperson</i>	<i>2001-04</i>
Collegiate School, Richmond, VA <i>Elementary Teacher</i>	<i>1996-01</i>

HONORS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Harvard Business School Online, School Management & Leadership Certificate, 2022
- Memorial Foundation for Children Board Member, 2022-25
- Virginia Assoc. of Independent Schools Board of Directors, 2019-24, President, 2020-22
- Equity Literacy Institute, Equity Facilitator Training Certificate, 2021, 2022
- Hanover NAACP Member, Education Committee, 2020-present
- National Association of Episcopal Schools Board Member, 2014-20





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