The next Head of School of Nansemond-Suffolk Academy (NSA) will lead a community that shares clearly defined values and institutional goals. The school’s mission statement, displayed throughout campus and known to all constituents, guides programs, curriculum, relationships, and vision. School leaders and faculty believe wholeheartedly in their calling at NSA. Together, they commit to strategic planning and improvement to ensure the school’s lasting impact on young lives.

NSA’s mission-driven focus is manifested in many ways. Students, parents, and alumni appreciate the school’s culture of connection. They enjoy close relationships with faculty. Teachers reach out beyond the classroom, encouraging students to expand their horizons and explore new possibilities. A walk through the hallways or a visit to classrooms reveals students laughing, smiling, listening to each other. They feel safe, secure, at home—together.

Parents affirm that their children love being at NSA. They are grateful for teachers who engage them, who urge them to try, who help them see that tomorrow’s successes can grow from today’s failures. Students take on challenges—to play a new sport, join the band, tinker with robotics, push themselves academically. As they mature, they earn more independence. They set goals, manage their time, focus on their work. It’s the essence of preparing for college and for exciting opportunities ahead.

Nansemond-Suffolk Academy seeks Head of School candidates who share this commitment to engage, inspire, and empower. The school’s next leader must be approachable, thoughtful, and compassionate. NSA enjoys real momentum, growing enrollment, two thriving campuses, an excellent faculty, and supportive families. All schools today face some uncertainty. Nonetheless, the NSA community has reason to feel particularly good about its progress and its position. The board’s strategic planning will provide a roadmap for the course immediately ahead. The next head will enjoy engaging the school community, empowering a gifted and committed staff, and setting a positive tone for enduring success.

Nansemond-Suffolk Academy is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory day school serving 925 students in grades PK-12 on two campuses.

To Apply

Please complete the online Application to become a Southern Teachers Candidate and submit a cover letter explaining your interest in and qualifications for this position.
As NSA has grown, so have expectations of the Head of School. No longer can the Head serve as primary manager of daily operations. Rather, she or he must provide broader vision and leadership while delegating management details to talented administrators. The Head of School will begin by focusing on the following:

**Improve STEM Program**

NSA has made great progress in its STEM programming. The Head of School will raise program visibility by ensuring better use of facilities and outstanding faculty leadership.

**Develop Main Campus**

The school’s main campus includes 40 acres of lightly developed property, a “blank canvas” for growth. The new Head will lead constituents in developing plans for this natural resource.

**Foster Inclusivity and Multiculturalism**

In 2021, with resources from NAIS and outside consultants, NSA developed its Inclusivity and Multiculturalism Plan to create a sense of belonging for all community members. The new Head of School will lead the plan’s implementation and wide-ranging efforts to diversify the student body, faculty, and board to ensure a full breadth of perspective and opinion.

**Integrate Harbour View Campus**

The construction and growth of the Harbour View Campus, serving grades PK to 3, has been an enormous success. Enrollment has been robust and retention between campuses is better than predicted. Making two campuses feel like one school requires ongoing attention. The Head of School will continue striving to integrate the Harbour View campus fully into NSA life.

**Develop Long-Term Financial Plan**

The Head of School will lead collaborative efforts to develop a long-term financial plan that supports the school’s enrollment management goals, addresses current pressure on facilities and staff in meeting all students’ needs, balances access and affordability, and targets new revenue opportunities.
The Position

Directed by and cooperating with the Board of Trustees, the Head of School provides people-oriented leadership, visionary and creative direction, and wise guidance to perpetuate excellence in college preparatory education for NSA families, consistent with the school’s financial capabilities.

Responsibilities:

- Manage personnel support programs that emphasize quality of life, job enrichment, open communication, and continued professional development of all faculty and staff members.
- Supervise the administrative team by providing vision, consultation, and evaluation for all school programs and by being a resource in resolving problems or complex issues.
- Meet regularly with administrative and faculty leaders and maintain an open-door policy that ensures excellent communication regarding all aspects of school life.
- Address families’ needs and concerns fairly and equitably, building positive relationships and ensuring clear communication to support each student’s development and success.
- Develop and monitor objective criteria to measure academic programs’ ongoing excellence.
- Create opportunities to engage all NSA families in school life.
- With the Board Chair, prepare agendas and resources to support Trustees’ informed decisions.
- Keep the Board of Trustees informed of financial affairs; maintain a balanced operating budget.
- Be responsible for developing annual budgets as well as short- and long-range strategic plans.
- Oversee and support all fundraising activities.
- Ensure an aggressive marketing program to enhance NSA’s visibility and maintain optimum enrollment in all grades.

The Honor Code

NSA strives to instill in all students a lasting devotion to honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility. Each year, the Honor Council leads an assembly in which Upper School students formally pledge their commitment to the school motto, Honor Above All, and to the Honor Code:

As a responsible member of the student body of Nansemond-Suffolk Academy, I realize that everything I do must be above reproach. I will be honest with myself and with others. I will refrain from all acts of cheating, lying, and stealing, and I will not tolerate those acts from others. I will actively encourage my fellow students to follow the highest standards of integrity.

Traits and Qualities:

- Team and community builder
- Clear, persuasive communicator—speaking, listening, and writing
- Highly visible and engaging mentor
- Wise counselor with a high degree of emotional intelligence
- Positive, optimistic, enthusiastic leader
Saints Values

NSA has defined the four core values to foster within the school community in order to achieve its mission and engage, inspire, and empower students. The Four Saints Values exemplify what it means to be a Saint:

**Character is Our Foundation**
NSA is committed to each student’s social, emotional, and physical development. We are intentional in helping all students reach their full potential. Our students feel safe, respected, and connected to those around them. They thrive academically, artistically, athletically, and socially. Faculty and staff embrace their responsibility as role models, setting high standards of character and affirming our foundation: Honor Above All.

**Community is Our Hallmark**
NSA is a dedicated and supportive community of students joined by loyal faculty and staff, parents, alumni, trustees, and friends. We are committed to one another, bound by our traditions, and devoted to our belief in Honor Above All. We share purposes and principles, and we seek to improve our school, our community, our society, our environment, and our world through our compassion, philanthropy, and leadership.

**Excellence is Our Standard**
From programs and pedagogy to personnel and practices, NSA strives for excellence in all Saints’ experiences. The NSA family is committed to helping all students reach their highest potential.

**Discovery is Our Passion**
NSA is committed to providing challenging and inspiring programs that prepare students for college and adult life. The NSA experience fosters a love of learning and intellectual exploration.
The School

Campuses and Facilities
Nansemond-Suffolk Academy serves over 900 students in grades prekindergarten through twelve on two distinct campuses.

NSA quickly evolved to include a full range of academic, athletic, and extracurricular programs. The Main Campus now covers 100 acres and houses all grade levels, as well as athletic fields and playgrounds. NSA established the Harbour View Campus in North Suffolk in 2016. Located in the fastest growing area in Hampton Roads, Harbour View serves more than 150 students in prekindergarten through grade three on a smaller campus tailored to young learners.

STEM Innovation Lab
In 2015, Nansemond-Suffolk opened its STEM Innovation Lab for students to explore concepts through hands-on activities. Design-thinking and project-based learning are integrated into the curriculum at all grade levels. Students create projects in a central makerspace using advanced software as well as 3D printers, laser cutters, soldering and electronics equipment, and more.

The STEM Innovation Lab is led by a STEM Specialist who collaborates with faculty and students to provide resources and assignments that build upon classroom concepts. Engineering, coding, and physics are introduced to young learners through building activities, coding software, and apps to provide early exposure and a foundation in STEM concepts. Lower School learners, for example, build slides and test them with marbles after reading “The Recess Queen.” Eighth grade students follow thematic units on coding, mechanics, and design, reinforcing creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. Upper School STEM electives include Design Thinking and Innovation. Some students enroll in Innovation Lab Internships or take courses through Project Lead the Way’s biomedical science courses that use professional tools to research new treatments and solutions to medical challenges.
The School (continued)

Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence

NSA strives to support all of its students and ensure their success. Funded by the TowneBank Foundation, the Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence provides supplemental learning support for students as well as professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. The Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence offers referred students reading intervention, study skills, and other support, as well as therapy and tutoring provided by outside partners.

The Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence works closely with students, parents, teachers, and administration to formulate learning plans to provide supplemental learning support for students in grades PreK-12. The Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence staff also meets with faculty to implement best practices and to further their understanding of learning differences and differentiated instruction.

Academics

Lower School

NSA’s Pre-Kindergarten provides a developmentally appropriate, student-centered program in a nurturing environment. Teachers value the whole child and focus on “learning by doing.” They foster a joyful sense of discovery and self-confidence. Play-based and teacher-initiated activities help children develop readiness skills. The student-teacher ratio and support from The Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence allow for small group work and differentiated instruction. Children enjoy music, art, cultural lessons and world language exposure, technology, library, and physical education. Teachers on the Main and Harbour View campuses work together to ensure consistent teaching practices and to explore topics that stimulate students’ interests and enrich their learning experiences.

NSA’s Lower School campuses are welcoming, safe environments for impactful learning. The curriculum is reviewed collaboratively to ensure alignment. Dedicated, knowledgeable faculty and administrators help students develop confidence as learners. Connections begun in Lower School often last throughout students’ years at NSA—and beyond.

Middle School

NSA’s Middle School offers a research-based curriculum and additional support in a comfortable setting through The Sandra F. Birdsong Center for Academic Excellence. Dedicated, knowledgeable faculty ease students’ transitions from Lower School and prepare them for academic challenges ahead. Students mature through leadership, athletics, and teambuilding activities. Students start taking elective courses in Middle school. The Advisory program promotes social, emotional, and physical wellness by incorporating Saint Values into daily lessons that lead to reflection about real-world issues and encourage community outreach. They explore world languages, the visual and performing arts, and STEM Innovation Lab opportunities. The 1:1 device program facilitates effective technology integration.
Upper School

The Upper School is a lively community of 286 students and 30 faculty members. A seven-day class rotation and a trimester academic calendar offer dozens of course selections and opportunities to explore new interests. Advanced Placement, Honors, and elective courses are offered in person and through the Constellation Learning Institute, and an internship program lets students explore new interests while supporting the school community. The faculty is committed to preparing students for the world beyond NSA by offering a variety of academic opportunities, increasing course relevance and authenticity through spiraled instruction, cross-content integration, and design thinking.

The Ann S. Powell Office of College Counseling offers a welcoming resource for Upper Schoolers preparing for their journeys into higher education. Counselors help students seek their "best fits" for success and fulfillment in college and career.

Student Life

Students have ample opportunities to explore interests, hold leadership roles, and participate in school traditions at NSA. Over 50 teams compete in interscholastic sports. Visual and performing arts opportunities include visiting artist workshops, marching band, chorus trips, theater performances, and dozens of clubs. NSA spirit and tradition are visibly woven into school life. Faculty members are also coaches, club mentors, and advisors. Elected student government members are honored to advocate for their classmates. The Lower School Student Council, Saints Ambassador Program and the AAA Safety Patrol Program provide leadership opportunities for younger students. The Upper School Student Council, Honor Council, and Judicial Council create meaningful contexts for positive impact on the school community. Middle and Upper School Advisory programs are well established, creating smaller communities that permit frequent check-ins with advisors and fostering social-emotional and powerful bonds between students and faculty mentors. Mid-day community time in Middle and Upper School allows for clubs, advisories, and personal conferences with teachers—relationship-building at the core of what makes NSA great.
The Community

Located in Virginia’s Coastal Plain region, Suffolk is a thriving community of 95,000 residents, cited as one of the best 100 places to live in the U.S. and one of the top 20 cities for young families in Virginia. It is part of the larger Hampton Roads metropolitan area, adjacent to Norfolk and Chesapeake, near the Chesapeake Bay and Virginia Beach. Hampton Roads is known for its U.S. Navy installations and miles of waterfront property and beaches, keys to the diversity and stability of the region’s economy. Suffolk’s central location in the mid-Atlantic region makes it a strategic choice for a diverse combination of industrial, manufacturing, distribution, retail, and hospitality corporations. The city has grown in recent years with new retail openings, mixed-use developments, and significant expansions by key employers.

Suffolk was established in 1742 on the Nansemond River. In 1972 it consolidated with Nansemond County to become Virginia’s largest city by area. Historically, Suffolk was an agricultural area best known for peanut production. It has maintained its small town feel even through its impressive growth. Suffolk lies next to a state park and wildlife refuge, 113,000 acres of forested wetlands and over 40 miles of trails. The Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge is home to Lake Drummond, one of Virginia’s two natural lakes. Proximity to beaches and waterways provides opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts, from hiking and biking to boating, sailing, surfing, and swimming.

Suffolk celebrates its agricultural past and its growing community. Annual festivals include the Suffolk Peanut Fest and a new music festival featuring national and local performers. The city offers a robust and eclectic cultural scene, including restaurants featuring some of the best flavors of the South, as well a range of unique shops, a popular farmer’s market, and museums and galleries like the historic Seaboard Station Railroad Museum and the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts. The flourishing arts community even benefits the school; each year NSA hosts an Art Show and Sale featuring work from over 100 local artists, and proceeds go to the visual and performing arts program.

Application Process & Timeline

For consideration, candidates should submit applications to Southern Teachers at SouthernTeachers.com, along with a current resume and a cover letter explaining their interest in and qualifications for this leadership position.

Questions may be directed to Mr. Jamie Estes at Estes@SouthernTeachers.com or 434-295-9122.

Please do not contact the school.

The new Head of School will begin work July 2023.