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.
Performance Objectives

**Communication and Support**
Consistent and open lines of communication are essential components in keeping a school community informed, and Sumner Academy believes in engaging all potential stakeholders to enhance the educational program. To that end, the next Head of School will create clear and consistent communication pathways with faculty, staff, and parents. The Head of School will work collaboratively with classroom teachers to determine the flow of regular communication that keeps parents involved and updated. The Head of School will play an active role in the life of the school by being a supportive and hands-on leader who visits classrooms, works alongside the staff, and is visibly present and engaged in the school community.

**Growth Management**
Sumner Academy is in a position for growth. The Lower School has one of the highest enrollment numbers in recent history; however, the Middle School is witnessing a decrease in enrollment largely due to increased competition from a newly opened Middle School. The new Head of School will work collaboratively with Admissions and relevant staff members to retain Lower School students as they matriculate into Middle School. Along with the Administrative Team and the Board of Trustees, the Head of School will review and confirm the best student-teacher ratio and work to stabilize class size.

**Fiscal Stewardship**
After a long season of financial endurance, Sumner Academy has now entered a new phase of financial health and surplus. The Board of Trustees is committed to investing a portion of the surplus into the school, and the new Head will work collaboratively with the Board to prioritize these investments.

**Professional Development**
Sumner Academy is committed to retaining and hiring passionate, caring, and highly-qualified staff. With hands-on learning and high teacher expectations at the forefront, the next Head of School will assess current professional development opportunities and develop a deep knowledge base around programming. The Head of School will work collaboratively with division leaders to create clear expectations for training during new teacher onboarding and ensure seasoned teachers have access to yearly professional growth opportunities. In this way, the school will maintain a robust curriculum from pre-kindergarten through grade eight.
The Position

The Sumner Academy Head of School ("HOS") is the sole employee of the Sumner Academy Board of Trustees ("BOT").

The HOS responsibilities include:

- The HOS shall serve as ex officio Trustee without a vote and be an ex officio member of all standing committees of the BOT.
- The HOS shall be the representative of the BOT in its relations with the faculty, staff, students, and parent body.
- The HOS shall select and hire appropriately qualified persons to serve as faculty and administration members (including some BOT members in an advisory role) for key hires of other administrators who regularly interface with the BOT, such as admissions, finance, and development officers).
- The HOS shall have direct supervision of the faculty and staff and shall coordinate the activities of the entire organization. The HOS shall hold regular meetings of the faculty and staff and see that the general policies of the BOT are understood and followed.
- The HOS shall supervise and control the school’s day-to-day operational and educational affairs.

General Duties of the Head include (but are not restricted to) the following:

- Embody, manifest, and advocate the mission of the school.
- Articulate the vision for the school and its future.
- Monitor and address all matters of school climate and culture.
- Manage the competing demands of the school’s various constituencies, respond to parent issues, and otherwise liaise with the parent body.
- Provide the BOT with various scenarios and possibilities for the BOT to consider as it does its work focusing on the strategic future of the school.
- Work with the BOT, its chair, and its committees in establishing school policies; review those policies and make recommendations for changes; attend meetings, prepare reports, maintain BOT records, and keep trustees informed on all aspects of the school’s operation.
The Position (continued)

- Oversee the strategic development of all curricular programs and materials and communicate to the BOT any significant changes in the school’s academic programs and other major enterprises consistent with the school’s mission, plans, and financial resources.
- Supervise all programs of the school (academic, athletic, ethical, and other extracurricular programs); monitor curriculum, grading, testing, and reporting to parents; prepare for and conduct periodic program evaluations; submit reports to external agencies as required; develop and establish student disciplinary policies, procedures, and standards of conduct.
- Supervise the business manager in preparing preliminary and final budgets; monitor income, expenditures, collections, and cash flow; maintain appropriate financial records; oversee employee benefit programs.
- Supervise the admissions director in determining programs for the recruitment of students, including marketing and outreach, information dissemination, applicant testing and interviews, determination of student eligibility for admission, and acceptance and decisions.
- Represent the school to all its constituents, including faculty and staff, parents, students, alumni, the business community, and the neighborhood.
- Supervise the development director and development efforts to cultivate and effect generous support of the school.
- Handle all matters regarding recruitment, employment, supervision, retention, and dismissal of school personnel; salaries and contracts; job assignments and performance evaluation; and orientation and training. Prepare employee handbooks and maintain appropriate personnel records.
- Represent the school in its relations with state and federal agencies, local, state, regional, and national educational organizations, and accrediting agencies.
- Act as liaison with third parties to ensure fulfillment of the school’s contractual obligations.
- Oversee schedules and arrange for facilities and other school rentals.
- Supervise, administer, and/or assist with all other aspects of the school’s operation, including but not limited to facilities maintenance and operation, food service, transportation, after-school programs, summer programs, development and fundraising, and alumni affairs.
- Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

I.D.E.A Hub

Sumner Academy seeks to cultivate critical-thinking, confident problem-solvers who can make life better for themselves and others. In order to achieve this goal, the school introduced a new, non-linear way of solving problems called I.D.E.A., which is modeled after Design Thinking. Rather than focusing on just a few subjects (like in STEM schools), this method of thinking can be applied to any field of study. While I.D.E.A. can be implemented in all fields of study and classrooms, Sumner Academy has constructed a dedicated space for this practice. They call it the I.D.E.A. Hub, and provides students quick and ready access to tools and resources to put their ideas into practice, from a 3D Printer, to cardboard, fabric, wood, and so much more.
The School

History
Sumner Academy was established in the fall of 1973. After two years in its original location, the Board of Trustees acquired a 30-acre campus featuring an 18,645 square foot main academic building, a 2,700 square foot preschool building, and a state-of-the-art 10,800 square foot gymnasium. In December of 1985, Sumner Academy became accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (now Cognia). Sumner Academy became the first independent school in the area to be fully accredited by SACS.

A new 17,000 square foot facility welcomed students during the 1999-2000 school year. The new building included eight classrooms, art and music departments, a kitchen, and a cafetorium with seating for 450. On April 7, 2006, a tornado destroyed the gymnasium. However, just six months later, an open house and homecoming was held to celebrate restoration efforts and announce a new campaign to replace the gymnasium. Not long after that, the Jim and Isa Carroll Field House was opened to the Sumner Academy community.

Academics
In a world where standardized test prep is highly valued, Sumner Academy stands out. Developmentally-appropriate instruction, hands-on opportunities, and high teacher expectations make Sumner Academy’s Lower School program anything but common. Students are encouraged to learn through exploration, play, and interaction, with teachers acting as helpful guides.

The robust Lower School curriculum is varied and bursting with opportunity. Learning etiquette, building motors, performing in school productions, coding software, reading excellent children's literature, competing in LEGO Robotics, and visiting Nashville theatre and music productions are among the many enriching experiences students enjoy. Parents are treated as essential partners, home-to-school communication abounds, and students receive a firm foundation for future excellence.

The Lower School is divided into Learning Communities. Learning Community I (LCI) is made up of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms. LCII is made up of first and second grade classrooms, and LCIII contains third and fourth grade classrooms. Each of the Learning Communities has a division coordinator. The Learning Communities support and promote the school’s mission of Vision, Passion, and Dedication.

Middle School students at Sumner Academy learn by doing, not just hearing. Students enjoy a gentle introduction into the world of Middle School beginning in 5th grade with caring staff that extends ample support while maintaining expectations of excellence in both academic achievement and character development.

The Sumner Academy Middle School staff is committed to educational excellence, inspiring and mentoring their students in all areas of school life. There are plenty of opportunities for students to participate in numerous activities including sports, clubs, and organizations. With small classes, students get to know each other as they share the classroom, the playing field, the stage, and community service projects. Sumner Academy is a great place to grow up.

While Sumner’s teachers aim to develop students’ skills in their areas of giftedness, they also aim to expand students’ horizons. Adventure Education field trips to the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina, San Antonio, Texas, Washington, D.C., Colonial Williamsburg, and John's Island, SC, provide incredible opportunities to apply in-class learning. Sumner Academy Middle School
students also participate in Volunteer Day to connect with their community, perform in Shakespeare plays, and present major research projects. Students can complete high-school-level mathematics and Spanish, and they are exposed to challenging subject matter across the curriculum in a safe, and caring environment.

Arts and Athletics

At Sumner Academy, visual arts’ emphasis is on doing. Students can often be found sketching outdoors, working with clay, or admiring the artwork of their peers, which is exhibited throughout the school. Students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade are introduced to various media, drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpting, and more. The art classroom is an essential part of the curriculum as it develops aesthetic perception through multi-sensory experiences. This enables students to express their own creativity and to experience satisfaction, accomplishment, and joy.

Sumner Academy offers music classes to all students as a part of the curriculum. Third-grade students are introduced to recorders and learn to read music while mastering the “belts” of recorders.

Beginning in pre-kindergarten, students are involved in active presentations, plays, and other school programming where they are given the opportunity to engage in public speaking. Middle School students participate in a Shakespeare play each year. They may participate as actors, be involved in designing the set, or play a role in stage production. Everyone has a part and works together to make the plays come to life. Taking part in these Middle School productions is a wonderful and memorable experience for students and parents alike.

Sumner Academy believes physical, social, and character development are gained through the experience of team sports. Participation in athletics provides Sumner’s students with important lessons for life. The athletics program emphasizes healthy competition, skill development, teamwork, and fun. The school offers both boys’ and girls’ team sports including soccer, basketball, cross country, golf, tennis and volleyball. JV and varsity teams play against other independent schools, usually within a 45-minute drive from Gallatin. Sumner also offers a running club and a soccer club (“Little Kickers”) for students in kindergarten through fourth grade.

Adventure Education

At Sumner Academy, teachers and administrators know that important learning takes place beyond the four walls of the classroom. From local theaters and museums to out-of-state adventures, Sumner students don’t just read about their subjects; they gain first-hand experience.

Last year, Sumner Academy’s 5th grade class went to Huntsville Space Camp for their Adventure Education. Space Camp is a one-of-a-kind experience at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, the Official Visitor Center for NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center. Sumner Academy’s students built parachute rockets, examined artifacts housed in the U.S. Space and Rocket Center, and experienced firsthand the National Historic Landmark Saturn V rocket. The camp taught STEM curricula, leadership principles, and teamwork skills, while simultaneously encouraging fun and creativity.
The Community

A picturesque city only 30 miles north of Nashville, Gallatin, TN, boasts high-paying jobs, low taxes, and a vibrant retail environment. Several national companies have facilities or headquarters in Gallatin, including Gap, Inc., RR Donnelley, Beretta, Meta (Facebook), and Servpro Industries, Inc. Annual events include the Sumner County Fair, held during the last week of August, the Gallatin Christmas Parade, and a Fall Festival held on the town square. In 2017, Gallatin was named "The Nicest Place in America" by Reader’s Digest.

Gallatin has a wide array of public parks that will entertain children and adults alike. From the campgrounds at Bledsoe Creek State Park to mountain biking trails, covered picnic tables, fishing, and boating at Lock 4 Park, residents enjoy beautiful outdoor spaces replete with dozens of recreational opportunities. Long Hollow Golf Course is well known for its 18-hole regulation course that offers a driving range, putting green, cart sheds, tournaments, and concessions. Moreover, in the warmer months, children appreciate going to Tommy Garrott Aquatics Facility, where they can enjoy 50-foot water slides, splash pads, and water towers. Fitness classes, kickball leagues, and regular 5k races help promote active lifestyles and community pride.

Gallatin’s residents appreciate and promote their illustrious history. The city has several homes that are on the National Register of Historic Places. These homes, which have been restored and are open to the public, include Cragfont, Rosemont, and Trousdale Place. Palace theater, the South's oldest silent movie theater in its original location now shows current movies, hosts live shows, and houses a variety of concerts and performances. The Sumner County Museum consists of 3 floors and 10,000 square feet of exhibits and artifacts dating back to prehistoric times. Some of the exhibits include war memorials, automobiles, and farm equipment, all of which have ties to Sumner County. Every fall, the Gallatin Ghost Walk presents an entertaining way to learn about Sumner County’s history. Costumed presenters are knowledgeable historians and long-time residents of the area.

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.

Initial interviews with the consultant at Southern Teachers will be ongoing.

The new Head of School will begin work July 2023.