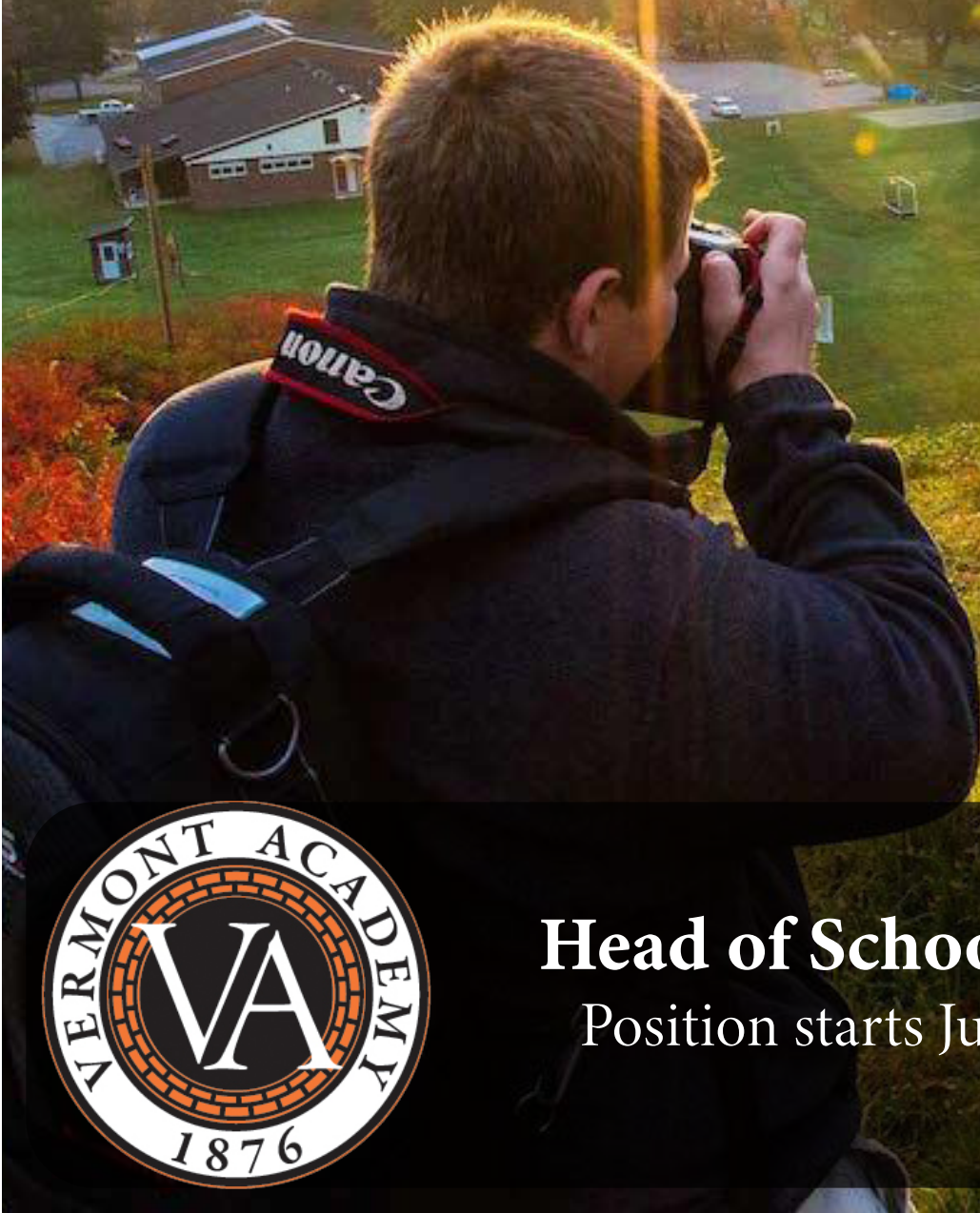


Vermont Academy

Saxtons River, VT



Head of School Search

Position starts July 1, 2025



EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE

EXPERTS IN SEARCH, TRANSITION & STRATEGY



ABOUT

Vermont Academy is a small New England college preparatory school where learning by doing, learning in nature, and learning in a supportive and safe environment successfully prepares students for a future of their own making. We are trailblazers of the future. We are leaning into educational innovation and defining ourselves clearly as a school of the future. The Vermont Academy Way is all about student-centeredness and offering students the opportunity to experience the joy of discovery.

Educational Philosophy: The Vermont Academy Way

Vermont Academy's educational philosophy is based on four historic values of ingenuity, independence, community, and love of the land. These values create the underpinnings of an early bound book called *The Vermont Academy Way*, and they represent the framework shaping the development of today's curriculum.

Ingenuity

Students will become problem solvers through work in the classroom, the community, and independent and team projects. Vermont Academy's program is student focused and growth oriented, emphasizing learning by doing. Creativity and problem solving run through all programs allowing students to be curious and to contribute solutions to academic and community challenges.

MISSION

A nurturing home that inspires trailblazers to advance our world



PURPOSE

Vermont Academy is a small secondary school, primarily boarding in nature, that sees the potential and value of every student and prepares them to thrive in college and life.



VISION

Using the Core Beliefs as a guide, Vermont Academy graduates engage in the world as critical thinkers and make a positive difference in the global community.

Independence

Students will know their strengths and challenges, and with mentoring from caring adults, strive to build on these strengths and overcome challenges. By cultivating self-awareness, students will become more resilient and able to advocate for themselves. Students are encouraged to maximize their individual growth as students, athletes, artists and citizens in individual and team settings.

Community

Students will feel a sense of belonging in a close knit community while also understanding the impact of their actions in school and in a wider global community. Adults in the Vermont Academy community know students well from close mentoring relationships which allow students to thrive. Based on the belief that all members of the Vermont Academy community are viewed as assets worthy of respect, tolerance and good citizenship are nurtured. Exposure to diverse and global perspectives expands cultural understanding. Leadership and community service opportunities provide avenues for students to contribute to the welfare of others.

The Land

Students will come to understand and appreciate the rural Vermont environment while also learning the importance of sustainability, preservation, and appreciation of “place.” Tucked in the safety of a small Vermont village on a 450 acre campus, students are never far from the natural environment around them. From ski hills, rivers, and hiking trails, to local farms and the sugar-bush, students are exposed to the serenity of the rural Vermont experience. Most of Vermont Academy’s longest held traditions celebrate Vermont’s resources and encourage students to understand and enjoy the importance of nature in their wellbeing and for the preservation of our Earth.



EACH MEMBER OF THE VERMONT ACADEMY COMMUNITY...

- acts with the highest level of honesty and integrity
- seeks and gives help when appropriate.
- is important, has worth and dignity, and is viewed as an asset
- will grow and develop and is given the opportunity to do so.
- considers the impact of their actions, on both the immediate and world community, for the benefit of present and future generations.
- cultivates strengths and seeks to overcome challenges.
- embraces personal and direct interaction to address issues and resolve differences.



EDUCATION FOR LIFE: ACADEMICS

Exploration Inspired

Vermont Academy faculty believe that the value of learning and knowledge cannot be fully realized if confined to the traditional classroom alone. VA cultivates a learning culture where students' individuality and ingenuity, the land, and the community liberate learning and knowledge for life. Through specialized curriculum and course offerings, VA is able to provide something that interests all students.

Growth Oriented

In every area of their education, VA meets students where they are as learners and members of the community and help them set a compelling trajectory toward achievement. With the MAPS (My Action Plan for Success) program, VA empowers students to set their own goals and coaches them as they work to reach them. Teachers focus on identifying and cultivating talent and creativity, fostering growth, and emphasizing the importance of the journey as well as the destination. VA's college counseling team works one-on-one with students to help them find a college that targets their best interests and abilities.

Student Focused

At Vermont Academy, every decision teachers make is driven by an emphasis on what is best for the students, first and foremost. The school prioritizes making teachers accessible and available to facilitate the growth of each individual student and their need to prepare for a changing world

To know more about VA's curriculum and courses click [here](#).

VA AT A GLANCE

- Founded: 1876
- Location: Saxtons River, Vermont
- Total students: 229 (from 20 states and 21 countries)
- Student/faculty ratio: 8:1
- Average class size: 10 students
- Boarding/day: 80% boarding, 20% day
- Domestic/international: 75% domestic, 25% international

Academics

- Number of Courses: 120
- Science Courses: Advanced physics, environmental science, advanced biology, biochemistry, and more.
- World Languages: French, Spanish, Latin
- AP/Honors Courses: 24
- The Center for Learning: A center for learning support on campus.
- Advisory: Led by a faculty member, 6-8 advisees per advisor, meets 2 times per week.

Studio And Performing Arts

- Theater – (3 productions per year, full theater curriculum, technical theater)
- 350-seat performing arts center
- Music – music theory, electronic music, recording, private lesson program, and vocal, jazz, and chamber ensembles
- Dance – ballet, jazz, tap, hip hop, contemporary
- Dance studio with Harlequin hardwood sprung floor
- Studio Art – painting, drawing, pottery, 3-D art, portfolio development, filmmaking, digital photography, black and white photography

CENTER FOR LEARNING

At the Center for Learning (CFL), teachers meet students where they are academically and work closely with them to develop effective skills and strategies for their needs and challenges. Through a partnership with VA's caring, dedicated, and knowledgeable staff, students develop self-awareness, learning about their strengths and using those to overcome their challenges. In this way, VA helps students become independent learners and develop skills they will use throughout their lives.

Our Learning Specialists Focus on Four Core Areas to Enhance a Student's Learning Experience

- Building Motivation and Confidence
- Coaching for Executive Functioning and ADHD
- Managing Long-term Projects
- Tutoring for Specific Subjects



COLLEGE COUNSELING

The Vermont Academy College Counseling Office strives to help VA students find the colleges that match their abilities and interests and where they can be successful. From the moment students join VA's tight-knit community, counselors work closely with each student to determine the right balance of academic challenge and extracurricular activity to serve them well on the road ahead. Finding the right college fit is an important journey in self-awareness and one that asks VA students to seek direction. VA is committed to providing each student with the expertise, guidelines, and resources to make that process run both smoothly and effectively.

TECHNOLOGY

The Technology Department at Vermont Academy supports the technology of the entire campus and provides wireless internet access to all buildings using a network of about 75 wireless access points. As well, academic buildings have public multi-function printers/copiers/scanners available for student use.

The Technology Department provides support to faculty and students from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the week and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon. Internet access times for students run from 6 a.m. to 10:45 p.m. during the week, except during study time. Seniors and PGs are afforded 24-hour internet access.

VA is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) school and all students are allowed to connect three (3) devices to the Vermont Academy network. We support mainly Windows-based and Mac-based computers.

To know more about our internet access across campus and beyond, click [here](#).



MAPS - MY ACTION PLAN FOR SUCCESS

MAPS is our trademarked methodology of helping students understand how they work and learn best, how to identify and build on their strengths, and how to develop personal strategies for reaching goals.

MAPS plans are working documents developed by each student with feedback and support from his or her advisor, teachers, coaches, and parents. The document encompasses several areas, including student self-assessments of strengths and weaknesses, learning preferences, and goal setting with action steps for success.

Students' main partner on their MAPS journey is their advisor. One of the advisor's key roles is to guide the student to discover, understand, and make decisions regarding his or her learning and development opportunities in the curriculum and community. Students meet with their advisor 2-3 times per week. Each advisory period has an assigned topic or curriculum organized by the Coordinator of the MAPS Program that the advisor follows, ensuring that all students receive the same information and guidance in a more personal manner and environment.

ATHLETICS

Vermont Academy's athletic program promotes development of the whole student athlete—head, hand, and heart—by focusing on teamwork and sportsmanship, self-discipline, and an appreciation of lifelong fitness.

Wildcat Nation

At VA, athletics are much more than an extracurricular activity. They are a fully integrated part of the Wildcat experience, providing opportunities for leadership, learning and personal growth for student athletes of all ability levels and interests.

Vermont Academy offers a competitive and engaging athletic and recreational program for student athletes looking to progress in their sport. As a member of the New England Preparatory School Athletic Conference (NEPSAC) and the Lakes Region League, the Wildcats compete in 14 varsity sports, such as hockey, basketball, and soccer, with more than 70% of students earning at least one varsity letter each year.





Each year VA graduates student-athletes who pursue their sport at the next level. Having worked closely with talented and experienced coaches, utilizing exceptional facilities, they leave VA with self-confidence, commitment, time management, and leadership skills.

VA Soccer with LaLiga Grassroots

Outside of the regular soccer season, in addition to participating on other VA athletics teams, VA student athletes have the opportunity to play for LaLiga Grassroots and be coached by LaLiga coaches. LaLiga Grassroots is a global initiative by LaLiga, the professional league in Spain, to support, promote, and bolster grassroots football around the world.

VA at Mount Snow

Due to our proximity to Mount Snow Ski Resort we've been able to bring VA student athletes world class snowboard and ski development programs with Vermont Academy at Mount Snow.

Vermont Academy at Mount Snow offers a unique opportunity for student-athletes to cultivate their passion for on-snow sports while maintaining a consistent college preparatory program. Athletes can elect to train four sessions per week at Mount Snow or board at the Matterhorn campus for a more immersive experience. Teachers and coaches work collaboratively to support goal-driven student-athletes while instilling confidence, perseverance, and independence. This exceptional combination of elite coaching and strong academic programming sets VA students on the path to athletic and academic success—without sacrificing one for the other. Vermont Academy at Mount Snow acts as a winter boarding school which allows student athletes to stay in dorms near the slopes so they can hone their skills while maintaining their studies in a one-on-one tutoring environment. VA's winter sports boarding school is equipped for intensive full-day training sessions to unlock the true potential of VA student athletes.



ARTS

From the physics whiz who discovers a talent for graphic design, to the varsity basketball player who gets on stage for the 24 Hour Play festival, to the robotics team member who plays drums in the jazz ensemble, every student at Vermont Academy has the opportunity to get involved in the arts.

Performing Arts

The Vermont Academy Performing Arts Department strives to make the performing arts accessible to all, empowering students to become creative collaborators in hopes of enriching the community at large.

Throughout their time at VA, students can learn to sing in the Vocal Ensemble, pick up an instrument, or two, or three, in a private lesson or in the Chamber and/or Jazz Ensembles, be a part of the spring musical, choreograph and perform a dance routine, become a theater tech wizard, write and perform their own songs, and so much more. By having numerous opportunities within the music, theater, and dance programs, many of VA's students transform into seasoned performers, writers, directors, and technicians by their senior year.

Performing Arts Facilities

- Nita Choukas Theater
- Horowitz Performing Arts Hall
- Scene Shop
- Lighting and Audio Booth
- Recording Studio
- Dance Studio
- Ensemble Rehearsal Room
- Music Practice Rooms
- A fleet of pianos, drum sets, guitars, etc.

Visual Arts

The Visual Arts department at Vermont Academy works with a wide variety of mediums, which include drawing, painting, collage, pottery, woodworking, and media arts including filmmaking and photography.

Each Visual Arts course combines an understanding of art skills and concepts along with students' personal creativity. VA hopes to cultivate visual literacy through its classes, its art displays, guest artists, and field trips/ weekend trips. Students are always encouraged to bring their own personal style to their work while VA teaches them essential lessons that relate to the technical level of the class.

The arts faculty at VA, who are working artists themselves, encourage students to enter juried competitions such as the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Each spring, courtesy of the Bob '37 and Beth Campbell Endowment Fund for the Arts and Lecture Series, all seniors are invited to participate in a competition to have their art be purchased by Vermont Academy for the school's permanent collection.

Visual Arts Facilities

- Horowitz Art Center
- Pottery Studio
- Media Arts Studio
- Black and White Photography Dark Room



THE VA COMMUNITY

The VA community is center to everything we do at Vermont Academy and makes VA a place like no other. By providing a small and supportive community, students feel known and are encouraged to grow and discover their voice. The lessons imparted in the classroom and dorms, on the fields and stage, provide students with an education for life.

Residential Life

Vermont Academy is a coed boarding school with a strong residential program that fosters community and prepares students for independent living. The dormitories serve as homes away from home, creating micro-communities where students build relationships with peers and supportive dorm parents. Beyond the dorms, the school provides various facilities like the Wildcat Den and Student Lounge for relaxation and socializing. Additionally, Vermont Academy offers a winter-term ski academy at Mount Snow, combining academic programming with professional skiing training

International Students

Vermont Academy welcomes international students from over 20 countries, aiming to create a sense of belonging for them. To support their transition, the international team provides extra care and resources to help students adapt to their new environment. New international students have the opportunity to arrive early to ease cultural shock and adjust more comfortably. During international orientation, student leaders, proctors, and faculty work together to ensure that all students feel comfortable and happy in their new home.





DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION AT VA

Vermont Academy’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee is comprised of dedicated faculty, staff, and students who aspire to create an environment in which all people—regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, political orientation, ideology, physical disability, ethnicity, economic level, age, or religion—can feel comfortable and thrive.

Through diversity, we ensure richness within our Academy community and celebrate that we are part of a global community comprised of many different kinds of people.

The DEI Committee strives to offer events and activities to engage, educate, and recognize the diversity within our own community. Recent activities include:

- Campus speakers
- Community lunches to celebrate cultural and heritage days and months
- Educational presentations at community meetings
- Lunar New Year dinner
- Black History Month dinner
- Trans Awareness Week presentation to faculty

SUSTAINABILITY

In 2014 Mitchell Thomashow wrote in *The Nine Elements of a Sustainable Campus*, “Rapid global environmental change is a contemporary reality, whether it affects the campus through climate change, through loss of biodiversity, through environmental pollution, through the provision of energy and food, or through the effects of a superstorm. The campus has a moral obligation to raise community awareness about these issues because they will ultimately affect the lives of all of its students.”

This is at the core of VA’s Sustainability Program, which is woven into our everyday lives due to our location in Vermont, a state known for its natural beauty, progressive views on community, social justice, and environmental conservation. VA’s Sustainability Program and Environmental Club are rooted in these local values while also maintaining a global perspective on issues surrounding humankind and our relationship with the natural world.



LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Vermont Academy Board of Trustees has launched the search for a successor to the current Head of School, Dr. Jennifer Zaccara, who, after seven years of dedicated service, is leaving the school well-prepared for an optimistic future.

Nat Conard and Mary Seppala of Educators Collaborative, LLC are assisting the Board in this search. Based on a community-wide survey and a two-day visit designed to learn about the school and interview many of its key stakeholders, Nat and Mary offer the descriptors below that represent community-wide sentiments about Vermont Academy's strengths, the challenges and opportunities lying ahead, and the skills and attributes desired in the next Head of School.

Strengths of the School

- Skilled and committed faculty and staff that knows each student well
- A strong commitment to the four pillars of ingenuity, independence, community, and love of the land
- Small interconnected community
- Loyal and grateful alumni and parents of alumni
- A diverse student body across many dimensions
- Abundant high-level athletic opportunity
- An entrepreneurial culture most recently exemplified in an exciting new initiative with Mt. Snow Academy
- A student-centered, supportive, college-preparatory learning environment
- Beautiful 450-acre campus with abundant fields, forests, and 50 km of hiking, mountain biking, and Nordic skiing trails

Opportunities for the New Head of School

- Build on the significant momentum of the past several years
- Continue attention to recruiting and retaining excellent faculty and staff
- Engage with the Board and community to develop future strategy
- Articulate the value proposition of Vermont Academy through marketing and branding to continue fundraising initiatives
- Engage in entrepreneurial activities to further differentiate VA in the marketplace
- Assess and address campus improvements

Attributes & Experience Desired in The New Head

- A confident, self-aware, and collaborative yet decisive leader who will move ahead courageously and in strong partnership with the Board to set the future course of Vermont Academy
- An experienced leader with a global perspective who can navigate the complexities of a multicultural boarding and day school
- A culturally competent leader who can draw constituents into meaningful dialogue related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
- An effective communicator and listener who understands the importance of transparency and welcomes the engagement of multiple voices in problem-solving
- A leader who has demonstrated vision and creativity in addressing challenging issues
- An inspiring and visionary public speaker who can passionately articulate the value of a VA education and who will be intentional and results-oriented in garnering alumni and parent support for the school
- A visible and approachable leader who will fully engage in campus life and lead with care
- A leader who has demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit
- An educator whose past work experience aligns with Vermont Academy's commitment to helping each student achieve their full potential



genuine
confident
empowered
vibrant
tinkerers
entrepreneurs
joyful
courageous
prepared
tenacious
adventurous
connected
inventive
inclusive
authentic
supportive
family



TO APPLY

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials in a single merged document, in the order listed:

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet (Contact Nat Conard or Mary Seppala for this document)
- Letter of Interest, addressed to the Vermont Academy Search Committee
- Current résumé
- Statement of Educational Leadership philosophy
- A list of five or more references with contact information (including phone numbers and email addresses)
- EC Disclosure Form (Contact Nat Conard or Mary Seppala for this document)

Please Address Inquiries to:

Nat Conard, Partner, Educators Collaborative

nconard@educatorscollaborative.com

and

Mary Seppala, Partner, Educators Collaborative

maryseppala@gmail.com

Be True to Your Best Self



Vermont Academy

Vermont Academy is a coed college preparatory boarding and day school in southern Vermont, serving grades 9-12 plus a postgraduate year.

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www.vermontacademy.org