



Head of School

Virginia Beach Friends School

Virginia Beach, VA

July 2023 • vbfschool.org



The Opportunity

Southern Teachers is assisting Virginia Beach Friends School (VBFS) in the search for its next Head of School. Virginia Beach Friends School believes in knowledge, character, and community. These touchstones guide students through their VBFS education grounded by the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (the S.P.I.C.E.S.). It is the goal of a VBFS education that all students strive to become life-long learners who understand their place in a global community and want to make the world a better place.

Virginia Beach Friends School aims to educate the whole child, developing strong academic intellect and personal character, through recognition of each child's individual light and living the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship.

Virginia Beach Friends School provides a space for childhood, the way it should be. Teachers do not have a predetermined outcome for what a child's future should be. They see students as people with thoughts and opinions. They give students the opportunity to succeed, fail, and grow within a family-like culture where they can freely express themselves. Students learn outside as much as they do indoors. The school's educational focus is on

building young adults through character and community, not just assigning tasks. Parents feel heard and are engaged as partners; many of the best ideas that have become programs at VBFS started as parent ideas.

Thanks to the hard work of the current leadership and board, Virginia Beach Friends School is stable and poised for success. Effective leadership at VBFS is calm, loving, and energetic. The community seeks a Head of School who is active and engaged, forward facing, and a strong communicator. He or she should respect and understand Quakerism, which is at the forefront, not the background, of everything they do at VBFS. Knowledge of experiential curriculum, commitment to diversity, and a sense of humor are all necessary ingredients for success.

The VBFS campus is located just two miles from the Atlantic beaches in one of the fastest growing areas in the state of Virginia. This location offers incredible educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities both for the school and its faculty and staff.

Virginia Beach Friends School is a Quaker co-educational independent school serving approximately 165 students ranging from toddlers through grade 8.

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.



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Performance Objectives

Respect and Understanding of Quakerism

A Virginia Beach Friends School education is rooted in the Quaker Testimonies: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship. These testimonies serve as a unique foundation that teaches students to view the world through a much larger lens. Weekly Meeting for Worship offers unprogrammed space for meditation and reflective thinking. The Quaker belief is that every person has a divine inner Light, equally deserving of love and respect, and it is evident by the integration of those beliefs in each classroom and at every age. The next Head of School will ensure Quaker culture remains at the center VBFS's values-based education.

Communication and Engagement

Consistent and open lines of communication are essential components in keeping a school community informed, and VBFS 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 faculty and parents informed and updated. The Head of School will play an active role in the life of the school by being an engaged and hands-on leader who understands the importance of being present at arrival and dismissal, greets all community members by name, works alongside the staff, and is visibly present throughout the school community each day.

Enrollment

Recently scaling back from PK-12 to PK-8, VBFS has returned to its original mission of educating young students. In year one, the new Head of School will become familiar with competitive area schools and will be able to articulate the benefits of a PK-8 Virginia Beach Friends School education to prospective families. With an increase in Early Childhood and Lower School enrollment, the Head will also partner with administrative and admission staff to devise strategies to retain current students and families as they matriculate into Middle School.

Facilities

In partnership with the School Board and Meeting, the Head will review and refine both the short- and long-term plans for physical improvements to renovate facilities on campus. The Head of School will work alongside the business manager to determine the financial resources available and necessary to invest in deferred maintenance.

Fiscal Stewardship

After a fiscally precarious period in the school's history, Virginia Beach Friends School has now entered a new phase of financial health. With the sale of land in 2019 and the most successful fundraising year in the school's history, the new Head of School will focus on financial sustainability as outlined in the 2022-2027 strategic plan. During the Head's first three years, priority will be placed on annual and capital fundraising initiatives.





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The Position

The Head of School is the sole employee of the Board of Trustees. Responsibilities of the Head of School include the following:

- Serve as a member ex-officio of all standing committees of the Board.
- Represent the Board in its relations with the faculty, staff, students, and patrons of the school.
- Select and hire properly qualified persons to serve as members of the faculty and administration.
- Supervise the faculty and staff and coordinate the activities of the entire organization; hold regular meetings of the faculty and staff and see that the general policies of the board are understood and followed.

General duties of the head include (but are not restricted to) the following:

- To embody, manifest, and advocate the school's mission.
- To articulate the vision for the school and its future.
- To monitor and address all matters of school climate and culture.
- To manage the sometimes competing demands of the school's various constituencies.
- To provide to the Board of Trustees various scenarios and possibilities for the board to consider as it does its work focusing on the strategic future of the school.
- To work with the Board of Trustees, its Chair, and its committees in carrying out established school policies; to review those policies and make recommendations for changes; to attend meetings, prepare reports, maintain board records, and keep trustees informed on all aspects of the school's operation.
- To work as a liaison between the school and the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting.
- To supervise all programs of the school (academic, athletic, ethical, and other extracurricular programs); to monitor curriculum, grading, testing, and reporting to parents; to prepare for and conduct periodic program evaluations; to submit reports to external agencies as required; to establish disciplinary policies and standards of conduct.

- To oversee and supervise all areas of accreditation to the school's accreditation bodies of VAIS (Virginia Association of Independent Schools) and FCE (Friends Council on Education).
- To supervise the Business Manager in the preparation of preliminary and final budgets; to monitor income, expenditures, collections, and cash flow; to maintain appropriate financial records; to oversee the employee benefits program.
- To supervise the Admissions Director in determining programs for the recruitment of students, including marketing and outreach, information dissemination, applicant testing, and interviews, acceptance and decisions.
- To represent the school to all of its constituents including neighborhood, parents, students, alumni, business community, faculty, and staff.
- To supervise the Development Director and development efforts to cultivate and effect generous support of the school.
- To handle all matters regarding employment, retention, and dismissal of personnel; salaries and contracts; job assignments and performance evaluation; and orientation and training; prepare employee handbooks and maintain appropriate personnel records.
- To represent the school in its relations with state and federal agencies and with local, state, regional, and national educational organizations and accrediting agencies.
- To supervise the School Counselor in the preparation and process of high school placement for 8th graders.
- To act as liaison with the other organizations to ensure fulfillment of the school's contractual obligations; to coordinate schedules, arrange for rentals, and coordinate procedures where the interests of both organizations are involved.
- To supervise and/or assist with all other aspects of the school's operation, including (but not limited to) facilities maintenance and operation, food service, transportation, summer programs, development and fundraising, and alumni affairs.





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The Position *(continued)*

Qualities and Traits

- Ability to build effective teams
- Driven by a clear vision
- Enthusiastic
- Steadfast
- Compassionate
- Approachable
- Actively Engaged
- Forward-facing
- Reflective
- Committed to diversity
- Knowledgeable about experiential learning
- Experienced in the classroom



The School

History and Academics

Virginia Beach Friends School was started in 1955 by Louise and Bob Wilson, both Quakers from North Carolina, who were also instrumental in starting the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting in 1954. In her book, *A View from My Window*, Louise Wilson outlines the history of the Meeting and school and how she and several fellow young Quakers and friends did everything, from driving the school bus to making lunches during the school's early months. The school maintains a strong relationship with the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting and members of the Meeting serving on the School Committee.

VBFS's classrooms are student-centered and inquiry driven. For example, an English teacher might use the Socratic method to discuss a text and ensure all voices are heard, or a science teacher might offer each student an extended lab period to have a hands-on experience of research and discovery. Friends School's values, combined with a rigorous curriculum that far exceeds the Common

S.P.I.C.E.S

A VBFS education is rooted in the Quaker Testimonies: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship - or S.P.I.C.E.S. These testimonies serve as a unique foundation that teaches students to view the world through a much larger lens. The Faith and Play curriculum is used as a vehicle for learning about Quaker faith and practice. Faith and Play is a set of stories that students can find meaning in and draw from their own life experiences. This is done through reverently paced storytelling, periods of reflective silence, gentle gestures and movements of story materials, invitations to wonder aloud together, affirmation of each person's sharing, individual work and creative expression using art or story materials, and an ongoing rhythm of communal listening, worship, and sharing.





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Core, allow VBFS graduates to be academically prepared for High School. More importantly, Friends School students are taught what it means to be kind people. They immerse themselves in a warm and engaging community that inspires authentic inquiry, serious scholarship, and deep reflection. Small class sizes and individualized instruction enable each student to grow academically and develop his or her sense of independence.

As a Friends School, Early School (age 2-Kindergarten) takes a whole child approach to each student's intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. The Early School program allows children to actively explore their environment. Classroom materials and experiences are designed to help children acquire visual and auditory skills, develop independence and self-discipline, and increase physical dexterity. Moreover, Early School encourages Friends School's youngest learners to cooperate in a group, take responsibility for themselves, and try new activities. Early School students learn through art projects, singing, dramatic play, yoga, STEAM, cooking, outdoor activities, and so much more.

The Lower School (grades 1-4) allows children to develop cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually at their own rate. VBFS believes children's learning styles, patterns, and progress are as individual and unique as they are. The school thus personalizes and customizes each child's education to fit their needs, interests, and abilities. Moreover, whether it is working in the school's gardens, learning about sustainability at local farms, planting seagrass in the community, or chasing weather balloons, Friends School's Lower School students learn by doing.

Middle School (grades 5-8) is an exciting yet challenging time for children as they navigate the transition from childhood to adolescence. At Virginia Beach Friends, teachers and administrators provide a small and nurturing environment for students to grow without the typical pressures found in Middle School. Students in fifth through eighth grade experience a diverse, challenging academic program seen through the lens of the Quaker testimonies. In addition to preparing students academically for High School, Middle School teachers emphasize organization skills, independence, responsibility, and decision-making, stressing the importance

At a Glance

Founded: **1955**

Grades: **Toddler - Grade 8**

Total Enrollment: **165**

Preschool Enrollment: **73**

LS Enrollment (1-4): **60**

MS Enrollment (5-8): **30**

Student Diversity: **25%**

Total Faculty and Administration: **38**

Faculty Diversity: **23%**

Student/Faculty Ratio: **7:1**

Average Faculty Experience: **10 years**

Average Faculty Tenure: **5 years**

Faculty with Postgrad Degrees: **22%**

Highest Tuition: **\$16,900**

Students Receiving Aid: **32%**

Annual Budget: **\$2.4M**

Total Debt: **\$0**

Annual Fund Goal: **\$225K**

Board of Trustees: **9**

Accreditations: **VAIS, FCE**

Most Recent Accreditations: **2012**

of participation and involvement in the learning process. At the simplest and most profound level, Friends' Middle Schoolers learn respect for self, for others, for school, and for the broader community.

Arts

The Art Studio at Friends is intended to be a creative workspace for every student. Here, children learn the importance of both safety and personal space in the studio. They also develop respect for their own creativity as they interact with this new space. Moreover, by actively engaging with materials and mediums in their raw forms, VBFS students build a strong technical vocabulary that serves them well as they move on to High School art programs.

The Music and Performing Arts Department is committed to providing students with diverse opportunities to gain a broad music education and to express themselves through the arts. VBFS students are offered hands-on experiences with





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Western and world instruments to provide an understanding of global cultures through music and performances. Teachers connect cultural arts and literature to everyday lessons to further enhance students' musical and cultural literacy. VBFS is recognized for vibrant vocal, steel pan, and percussion presentations, as well as dramatic productions. Additionally, first through eighth-grade students perform an annual production at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA).

Quaker Education

Weekly Meeting for Worship at Virginia Beach Friends offers unprogrammed space for meditation and reflective thinking. When a member of the VBFS community feels impassioned to share, they stand and speak publicly to the group before settling back into silence, allowing everyone to consider something new if they wish. Often, students plan topics for consideration in Meeting for Worship. Each week a different class leads Meeting for Worship, allowing all community members to build responsibility and accountability for a query.

VBFS aims to graduate students who are actively engaged in the world around them, who think critically about current events, and ask questions about the causes of injustice. Teachers and administrators strive to equip students with the tools needed to act on their ideas and to be empathetic, collaborative, and reflective.

These core values of the school are taught with a hands-on approach, with each student actively engaging with local, regional, and national non-profits on a variety of issues and causes. These serving opportunities grow students' ability to reflect on the world around them as well as their understanding of personal responsibility.

Quakers believe that every person has a divine inner light, equally deserving of love and respect. At Friends, those beliefs are woven into every classroom, at every age, throughout the year—allowing the school to create an environment that is fair and inclusive, regardless of race or gender. VBFS sees diversity as a value and aims to celebrate differences rather than being defined by them. Moreover, VBFS believes a diverse community fosters a healthy educational experience and allows children to be their best selves, at every stage.



The Learning Center

Virginia Beach Friends School understands that every student's educational journey is different. The school's goal, primarily, is to ensure all students' academic and social success in and out of the classroom. The Learning Center at Friends provides students with educational support, instruction, and organizational assistance that helps students reach their potential.

At the Learning Center, VBFS students can receive individual evaluation and assessment, measurable goals and objectives tailored to individual needs, organizational skills, one-on-one instructional support, remediation of essential academic skills, and comprehension skills. These services are tailor-made for the individual student and help ensure that each child at VBFS is receiving the care and support they need to reach their potential.





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The Community

Virginia Beach is home to a flourishing culinary scene, rich cultural and entertainment opportunities, family-friendly attractions, and miles of beautiful beaches. The ViBe Creative District serves as a vibrant center for various creative industries in the Oceanfront District. Locals and visitors alike enjoy active local artist's studios at the Virginia Beach Art Center and world-class exhibitions at Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA). In the heart of Virginia Beach, the Town Center district offers high-end shopping, dining, and entertainment. Moreover, the Town Center's Funny Bone Comedy Club, Sandler Center of the Performing Arts, or Zeider's American Dream Theatre offer hours of live entertainment.

Virginia Beach's famous oceanfront offers live music, street performances, outdoor cafes, and food vendors. The famous

three-mile-long boardwalk is perfect for rollerblading, walking, running, biking, or walking while enjoying the views and sounds of the ocean. From volleyball tournaments to jazz nights, Virginia beach's oceanfront offers endless engagement throughout the year.

Virginia Beach's business community is renowned for its highly diverse collection of industries, including nationally and internationally known corporate headquarters, billion-dollar defense contractors, and technologically advanced manufacturers like Lockheed Martin and DOMA Technologies. Additionally, prestigious colleges like William and Mary, Hampton University, and Christopher Newport University are all within a 90-minute drive. More than just a popular tourist destination, Virginia Beach offers myriad opportunities for residents looking to further their education or careers.

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.

