



Head of School Position and Candidate Specification

March 2021

We are guided by both our *Mission* and our *Equity & Community Statements*:

- **Our Mission Statement:** *San Francisco University High School welcomes students of demonstrated motivation and ability to engage in an education that fosters responsibility and the spirited pursuit of knowledge. We are a school where adults believe in the promise of every student, and together we work to build and sustain a community of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and talents. UHS challenges each individual to live a life of integrity, inquiry, and purpose larger than the self.*
- **Equity & Community Statement:** *At UHS, we believe that the deepest learning requires collaboration among people who embody a diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, and perspectives. In order to build and sustain a community that is comprised of a wide range of social and cultural identities, we must continually engage in furthering our self-knowledge, equity literacy, and ability to communicate effectively across differences. We challenge ourselves to do this work on both a personal and an institutional level, recognizing that our community is part of a larger and more complex world.*

The founders of San Francisco University High School believed in the educational value of diversity and pluralism, imagining a school that drew upon the exciting variety and resources of San Francisco and that developed creative, capable, and socially responsible leaders. They envisioned a school that would achieve both equity and excellence, encompassing the arts, academics, athletics, and community engagement. Over 40 years since its founding, the catalytic vision for the school has produced generations of graduates who have distinguished themselves by making meaningful contributions in all sectors of society, and in doing so, built an outstanding reputation for the school.



The school continues to strive to meet this ambitious plan. Students and faculty are drawn to the school for its strong academic program, its culture of inquiry and intellectual energy, its robust athletic and arts programs, and its commitment to supporting student success. With our core values of inquiry, care, integrity, agency, and interconnection, UHS continues to be a place of continuous learning and growth. UHS is at the forefront of changing high school culture, affirming our fundamental commitment to intellectual challenge and vitality while simultaneously responding to the demands and opportunities of tomorrow.

Our vision is to be a courageous community dedicating ourselves to embracing education as a transformational, rather than transactional endeavor empowering our students to invent and sustain their own vision of success and sense of purpose, establishing a school culture that provides a dynamic and challenging education while simultaneously promoting wellness, care, and wholeness, embodying our fundamental belief that collaboration among people with diverse backgrounds and life experiences is essential to deep knowledge, and ensuring that University High School remains a strategically nimble institution, engaged in learning, reflection, and growth on all levels. With this vision, the Strategic Design Committee launched [a two-year design process](#) that involved far-reaching institutional reflection, meaningful collaboration within our school community, and profound discovery. This work shapes the exciting curricular, co-curricular, facilities, and community work ahead.



UHS and its community of students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents and caregivers, and alumni continue to explore the critical issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. UHS has a long history of a high level of focus on equity and the community, beginning in 1978 with the creation of the Summerbridge Program - a pioneer program in preparing middle school students from under-resourced circumstances to enter and thrive in college preparatory high schools. We recognize however that while UHS has made progress regarding antiracism and equity efforts, we have a long and difficult – yet hopeful – road ahead as we strive to create a community where all can bring their full selves to school and thrive. We will continue to push the envelope of conversation around equity and community, to review curriculum and text, to name and interrupt events, attitudes, and mistreatments that harm any member of our community. UHS benefits from a strong community, an excellent educational program, and a collective commitment to grapple with challenging issues in our classrooms and all programs, and we strive to build an open dialogue that is fostered by trust, integrity, conversation, and a willingness to be bold in thought and action.



The school has bold ambitions for the future and has embarked on an endowment and capital campaign *Connect.Invent.Design*, its priorities informed by the Strategic Design. The connecting of our community, and the inventing and designing of values driven programs, spaces, and practices together built the “catalytic context” that defines the UHS education and represents our intentional and ever-expanding efforts to create new and innovative learning opportunities for both students and faculty. The endowment will increase meaningfully, supporting financial aid, teachers’ sabbaticals and continuing education, and programming. The campaign will enable an exciting new building at [3150 California Street](#) - housing state of the art science labs, community space, and a new gymnasium.



Students choose UHS for the academic program and the community. They are challenged, inspired, and supported by their fellow students and the faculty. Our faculty not only delivers a curriculum that stimulates students in the spirited pursuit of knowledge, but also provides the intentional support that allows our students to be happy, healthy, and fulfilled. By exploring our wide range of curricular and co-curricular offerings, students develop their own vision of excellence and are transformed by their high school experience, well-prepared for college, and ready to define their own version of success and purpose.

2020-2021 San Francisco University High School Profile



- 410 students, representing 82 middle schools (40% independent, 60% religiously affiliated and public)
- 34 teams across 14 different sports (84% of students play on at least one UHS team per year)
- 52% self-identified students of color, 45% self-identified faculty of color
- 105 courses offered, 84 elective courses, 50% of UHS students will create at least one Independent Study project during their time at UHS
- Three annual theater productions, six annual art openings and four annual music concerts (80% of students take more than the two-year Arts requirement)
- 50+ student-led clubs, affinity spaces and organizations
- 6,000+ Community Engagement hours performed by UHS students annually
- 6:1 student-to-faculty ratio
- 75 Faculty members, 84% have advanced degrees and average 11 years of teaching at UHS
- \$31.5M endowment (before allowance for financial aid)
- 23% of students awarded \$3.6M in financial aid in 2020-2021 school year. Tuition costs for families participating in the financial aid program: \$14,800

For additional information about UHS, please visit: <https://www.sfuhs.org/>



The Board of Trustees at San Francisco University High School seeks an educational leader with the experience, energy, and vision to build upon the school's established reputation of academic excellence and to continue to evolve the school's program and culture to serve its creative, curious and diverse student body. In partnership with a talented leadership team, a fully engaged faculty, and a dedicated board, the Head will embrace the opportunity of preparing students for an increasingly complex world and will be energized by the school's commitment to intellectual challenge and vitality.

The next Head of School will relish the opportunity to be a highly visible member of the community and will engage in the full life of the school. The next Head will be a courageous, aspirational leader with a track record of impact on issues of equity and social justice and will work tirelessly in the effort to create an environment where all students, faculty, staff, and parents and caregivers feel a strong sense of belonging. They will be driven by the imperative to create an educational environment and culture that fosters community, cultivates intellectual curiosity, and challenges each individual to live a life of integrity, inquiry, and purpose larger than the self.

The Head of School is appointed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for all aspects of the school, including the academic program, operations and financial health, and external relations and fundraising. In partnership with the board, the Head is responsible for setting the school's strategic priorities and achieving the school's mission. They will be enthusiastic and motivated for the opportunity to complete a major campaign and building project and bring that building into the day to day operations of our school with all of the organizational and programmatic elements that a project of this size requires. Equally important, the Head will model the values of UHS and thrive in this community of learners.



IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Academic Leadership

Accomplished educational leader with experience inspiring dedicated, creative, and intellectual faculty and staff.

Student-Centric Leadership

Has engaged effectively and forged strong, authentic bonds with smart, curious young adults.

Impact on Efforts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

A demonstrated commitment to and experience leading diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging initiatives and a track record of impact on the organizational culture, practices, and strategies.

Financial and Operational Leadership

An understanding of the financial and operational underpinnings of an independent school and the levers to secure a fiscally sustainable institution, including the capacity to be a successful fundraiser. The skills and desire to successfully complete a major building project, bring the building into operation with the organizational and programmatic elements that the project requires.

Partnering with Board of Trustees

An ability to collaborate effectively and transparently with the Board of Trustees.

Academic Credentials

Strong academic credentials: relevant advanced degree preferred.

CRITICAL COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESS

Academic Leadership

In a school with an enduring commitment to academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, and the support of the whole child, the Head will be an educator dedicated to a transformative experience for all students and faculty. With a strong intellect and a penchant for engaging in discussions, the Head will support the continued evolution of the school, mindful of its focus on providing an academically challenging program, promoting a sense of wellness, and fostering a purpose larger than the self. Passionate about teaching and learning, they will encourage the faculty to think expansively about curriculum, pedagogy, and the use of technology and ensure that the program reflects the values of inclusion and belonging fundamental to the school. Recognizing that a creative, inquisitive faculty is the lifeblood of every strong school, the Head will recruit and nurture a talented, diverse faculty and inculcate the culture with the importance of continuous improvement and professional development with a focus on promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Community Builder

The next Head will embrace the school's culture and community while concurrently continuing the school's journey to be an intentionally diverse, equitable, and inclusive school where all members feel connected, engaged, and fully known. The next Head will move fluidly through the school and the neighborhoods of the school, able to listen well, convey appreciation and respect, and build authentic relationships with a broad range of people. The Head will be visible and accessible and will communicate consistently about priorities, values, and goals. In a complex and diverse institution located in the heart of San Francisco neighborhoods, they will create a shared sense of community by communicating clearly, listening to all voices, and engaging in socially responsible ways.

Strategic and Operational Leadership

A sophisticated leader with strong business acumen, the next Head will be a strategic, effective steward of the school's financial, physical, and human assets. In partnership with key stakeholders, the Head will set priorities that reflect the school's values and clearly communicate the plan. They will empower and inspire a talented, diverse team to work collaboratively, listen well, and partner to solve problems and chart an ambitious, sustainable path forward. The Head will balance the need to establish the appropriate levels of autonomy and accountability, creating an environment where people feel challenged, empowered, and nurtured. They will develop strong relationships with the school's Board of Trustees and partner closely with

them on major institutional issues. The next Head of School will foster a culture of philanthropic support from alumni, parents and caregivers and will be an effective fundraiser, communicating the value of UHS in a compelling way and driving success in both annual and capital giving.

OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- A broadly engaged intellect, a courageous leader with humility, unquestioned integrity, good judgment, and a strong internal compass.
- Warm and engaging; genuinely interested in the lives of students, faculty, and staff members.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills – thoughtful, inspiring, and authentic.
- The confidence to listen carefully, make decisions, and share credit.
- A sense of humor.

THE SEARCH PROCESS

San Francisco University High School is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages individuals of all backgrounds and cultures to consider this leadership position. The school's commitment to inclusivity encompasses, but is not limited to, diversity in nationality, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ability.

The search committee at San Francisco University High School is assisted in this process by Spencer Stuart, and it welcomes comments, questions, nominations, or expressions of interest. To contact the committee, please send an email with any supporting materials to the confidential address UHSHead@spencerstuart.com.