

POMFRET



Position Statement Head of School Search Pomfret School

Pomfret, Connecticut
Start Date: July 1, 2025

HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

"Pomfret's draw continues to be the combination of high-caliber educational opportunities with small-scale, individual relationships with faculty. A number of schools claim the small-scale individuality branding, but few combine that with the level of educational attainment at Pomfret."
—(Pomfret Alumnus)

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1894, Pomfret is an independent co-educational college preparatory, boarding and day school in Pomfret, Connecticut. Set on a stunning 500-acre hilltop in Northeastern Connecticut, Pomfret has been called one of the most beautiful schools in the world. The campus was designed by the celebrated Beaux-Arts architect Ernest Flag and world-renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. The campus is an hour from Boston, Hartford, and Providence, and only three hours from New York City.

When touring the Pomfret campus, it becomes immediately apparent that Pomfret is a school that knows itself, a school that states its mission, vision, and values clearly, even displaying them in large type on walls throughout the campus. One can't miss them. More importantly, Pomfret is an inclusive and welcoming community of administrators, faculty, staff, and students who live by these tenets. These tenets are the unseen influence behind their decisions and the internal motivation behind their actions. They embody the patterns of thought and behavior valued on campus and remind members of the community who they are and what they strive to be each and every day.



Led by a visible, humble, and ever-supportive Head of School, and brought to life by an exceptional and dedicated faculty, Pomfret is bold and practical in its approach — intensely focused on the interests and needs of its students. Pomfret facilities are impressive. There is a palpable excitement on campus in anticipation of VISTA, the new science building set to open in September. When VISTA opens, it will become the most visible sign of Pomfret's deep commitment to education in science, technology engineering, and design, attracting a whole new generation of STEM-minded students to the Hilltop. Virtually every academic space on campus has been the beneficiary of thoughtful renovation. Within a broad and challenging curriculum with multiple pathways to success, students can exercise choice and access a number of signature experiences, including trademark programs such as Project: Pomfret, Experiential Travel, and Certificate Tracks.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

Beyond the classrooms, Pomfret offers students a robust list of co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities and options. Athletics hold a cherished place in Pomfret lore. A member of the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council, Pomfret has recently brought home several championships, most notably in hockey and volleyball. Under the mentorship of experienced teacher-coaches, the School routinely graduates students who go on to enjoy college athletic careers. In recent years, Pomfret has cultivated its rivalry with Millbrook School and forged a spirited Battle for Route 44 competition.

The Arts, too, hold a prominent place on campus. Creativity is central to the Pomfret experience. There are murals, student self portraits, and demonstrations of creativity all over campus, from stairwells, to ceilings, to a spectacular 25-foot tall, multi-windowed, west-facing art studio with literally every surface displaying spectacular student work.

At its core though, Pomfret's authentic relationships formed and nurtured in an intentionally small and intimate community, where one faculty member or student can impact an entire school, may be what distinguishes Pomfret from other leading independent schools. Pomfret administrators, faculty, and staff are "all-in" at all times, and engage students at multiple points of contact. Pomfret students are known and know others and, perhaps most importantly, are given the space and time to grow into their best selves, not just what others have in mind for them. Pomfret puts

the student and student well-being at the forefront of its thinking always, including the building of a new Health and Wellness Center in 2018. Twice a week, Pomfret faculty and students gather in Clark Memorial Chapel to share and reflect and hear senior chapel talks. Over time, these talks have become a significant and beloved part of school culture. Pomfret also has a highly regarded advisory program distinguished by a network of faculty advisors who support students across every facet of school life. Pomfret advisors take their in loco parentis role seriously, serving as the go-to adult in a student's life and a lifeline between the parent and the School. The cornerstone of the advisory experience is the advisory dinner, which takes place on Tuesday nights, where advisor and advisees cook and eat together in the advisor's home.

The Pomfret community cares deeply about the health of the natural world and the preservation of its rural heritage. By acting more sustainably, the School is committed to protecting the Last Green Valley for generations to come. In particular, Pomfret utilizes "trigeneration" technology to produce power, heat, and coolant simultaneously. Thanks to this smarter system, the School generates enough homegrown electricity to cover approximately 50 percent of its power needs and 100 percent of its heating and cooling needs.

In recent years, Pomfret has bolstered its enrollment profile while diversifying the composition of its student body and benefitted from healthy increases in its annual fund and endowment. Pomfret graduates have matriculated to some of the country's best universities. And beyond college, Pomfret alumni have gone on to — quite literally — change the world.

In short, Pomfret is well positioned to build on its history and trajectory under new leadership. The current strategic plan, Change Makers and Problem Solvers, provides a strong foundation for the School's future; and as it nears the successful conclusion of Amplify: The Campaign for Pomfret School, the largest fundraising campaign in Pomfret history, the School is operating from a position of real strength.



HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

FOUNDING: 1894-1897

William E. Peck was a member of the faculty at St. Mark's School in Southboro, Massachusetts, for 23 years. By the time Mr. Peck's more progressive tendencies came into conflict with the school, he had risen all the way to the role of headmaster. Rather than submit, Mr. Peck resigned. With his wife, Harriet, Mr. Peck purchased the Charles Grosvenor Inn; and there, on October 3, 1894, Pomfret School was born.

Peck's personal reputation and charisma, paired with his ability to engender confidence, contributed to the success of the new undertaking from the very start. By the beginning of the 1896–1897 school year, Pomfret had doubled in size, growing from 42 to 80 students and from 6 to 11 faculty members. During those early years, the Pecks lived in one of the cottages attached to the inn. A single building (the first “main house”) housed the dormitory, classrooms, and dining hall, and a nearby stable served as the first gymnasium.

Mission: Pomfret School empowers students to pursue lives of purpose and meaning.

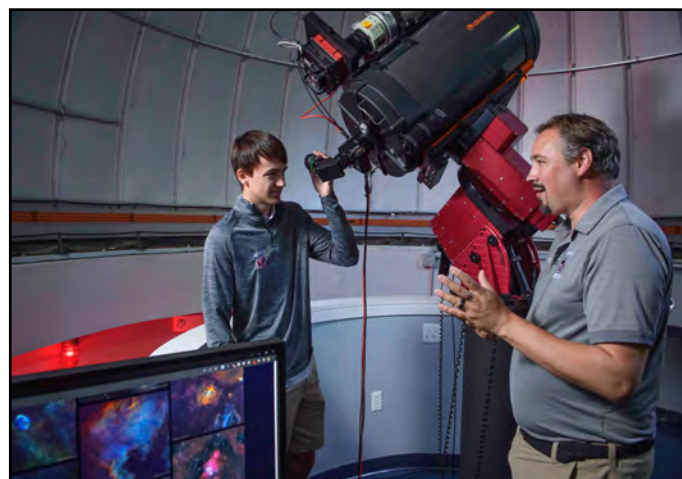
Vision: To inspire the next generation of changemakers and problem solvers

POMFRET'S VALUES

Community: We care for ourselves, the people around us, and the community in which we live. We come together to better address challenges and learn from each other. We champion diversity and inclusion seeking to understand and be understood.

Growth: We thrive on creativity, innovation, and change. We inspire others with our engagement, determination, and optimism. We take calculated risks and rebound from failures with renewed energy.

Integrity: We treat people with respect and compassion. We speak and act with sincerity, honesty, and civility. We dare to hold ourselves and others to the values of Pomfret School.



HEAD OF SCHOOL POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

PORTRAIT OF THE GRADUATE

- Learns with curiosity and integrity
- Engages inclusively with the community
- Communicates purposely
- Navigates challenges strategically
- Creates authentically
- Leads and collaborates with humility
- Cultivates habits of wellbeing

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Pomfret has been engaged in diversity, equity and inclusion work for over 50 years. Today, the scale and scope of the School's work on race, gender, and class has expanded to include virtually every measure of diversity — from religion and sexual orientation to age and ability to culture and appearance.

Pomfret's DEI programs focus on enhancing ALL student's life experience by exposing everyone to various perspectives. Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion will allow all to feel valued and affirmed by exploring and honoring differences. Diversity improves socialization, critical thinking, acceptance, and mindfulness. The school strives to ensure that each student, specifically those historically excluded, feels welcomed, included, and knows they are valued.

There is intentionality in fostering a community rooted in the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The school enhances, promotes and welcomes students' and staff's unique backgrounds and experiences as we believe these differences will help strengthen the movement for educational equity. Faculty and staff are offered ongoing professional development related to the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and behaviors necessary to build and sustain a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. At Pomfret, it's what the School community does together that sets it apart.

"It's the sense of community and the people (students, faculty, staff, families, alumni, trustees) who are the 'special sauce' of Pomfret. Creating a community of belonging that cultivates and fosters relationships is a critical component that underlies all of the other work." —Pomfret Administrator

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Pomfret is a school "powered by students." By taking the rigor, challenge, and curriculum of a proven college prep experience and making it personal, Pomfret's distinctive brand of education reflects a standard of excellence that challenges, engages, and inspires each student to succeed. Pomfret teaching faculty, who are experts in their field, encourage students to "go wide" as they explore their interests, and then "go deep" once they find them. Each of Pomfret's seven academic departments features a carefully scaffolded track and sequence of introductory courses, compelling electives, and challenging advanced courses that ultimately leads to deep comprehension in a given subject area. With classes like forensic science, aquaponics, economics and entrepreneurship, astronomy, coding, animation, anthropology, ceramics, happiness, and so many others, the problem for Pomfret students isn't what to take, it's what not to take.



HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET



Beyond the day-to-day curriculum, Pomfret offers a range of specialized programming including:

Project Pomfret: Each year, Pomfret sets aside two weeks for students to collaborate with faculty on creative and impactful experiential education projects. *We use our Hands to make something, our Feet to do something, our Heads to learn how to do something, and our Heart to do something for others.* The projects have real world applications and align with at least one United Nations Sustainable Development Goal. The culmination of work is celebrated in a project fair, TEDx event, art gallery, and reflective essays.

Experiential Travel: Many Pomfret students choose to travel in the US or abroad during their time on the Hilltop. In doing so, they gain valuable insight into different cultures, different languages, and different ways of seeing the world. More often than not, these lucky students return transformed by the travel programs, whether they travel with the travel abroad program or the state's program, and are excited to share what they have learned with others.

Certificate Tracks: The certificate program gives motivated, independent-minded students the opportunity to gain deep exposure to a specific area of

study during their time at Pomfret. The result is a rare and powerful experience that encourages students to pursue a genuine interest with purpose and passion. Certificates are diploma distinctions that appear on a student's transcript. Students can begin work on their chosen certificate starting junior year. The successful completion of a certificate requires foundational and concentration-level coursework, learning experiences outside of the classroom, a portfolio with reflections, meetings with a faculty mentor, and the successful defense of a capstone presentation. To qualify, each candidate must submit a proposal declaring his or her interest during the spring of sophomore year.

In 2022, the School identified four academic goals, which are outlined in its current strategic plan, Change Makers and Problem Solvers. The aim of the first goal is to further increase coherence across academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs. The second goal is to connect student learning with real world experiences and challenges. The third goal is to amplify student voice and choice in and beyond the classroom. And the final goal is to reimagine student assessment, reporting, and transcript design. By the time the new head of school arrives on campus in July 2025, all of these goals will have been completed or nearly completed.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

STUDENT AND RESIDENTIAL LIFE

The student life experience at Pomfret is designed to complement the academic journey by offering enriching programs with an emphasis on building character, developing cultural competency, making good decisions, and cultivating socio-emotional fluency. With opportunities for clubs, social activities, co-curriculum programs, and health and wellness programs, students build a personal portfolio centered on responsibility and well-being at Pomfret and develop skills that will equip them for college and for life.

The cornerstone of the student life curriculum at Pomfret is QUEST. This signature program is at the heart of our student's social and emotional learning, and an integral component of their growth and development. The four pillars of the QUEST curriculum (Character, Community, Being, and Belonging) provide students with opportunities to learn essential knowledge and skills, consider new and different perspectives, practice habits of mind and body, make authentic connections, and engage in the vital work of discovery. QUEST is integrated into the daily schedule across the school year to complement academics and deepen the community experience. Students participate in QUEST by grade level, and sessions and activities are facilitated by a team of student leaders and faculty.

More than 90 percent of faculty live on campus — many in one of the twelve campus residence halls located on campus. Third form students are housed in cozy house dorms around “Freshman Circle,” while most upper formers live in traditional college-style dorms colloquially referred to as The Bricks. The Olmsted Student Union is a vibrant meeting place where students congregate to play Ping Pong or grab a quick snack. And every weekend, there are dozens of activities for students to choose from, including on-campus paint parties, trips to local shops and restaurants, and off-campus excursions to Boston, Providence, or New York.



ADMISSIONS AND COLLEGE COUNSELING

Pomfret serves 350 students in grades 9 through 12 and also offers a post graduate year. About 4% of the student body are post graduates. Eighty-five percent of the students are boarding students who hail from 29 states and 29 countries and 15 percent of the students are day students. Twenty-two percent of Pomfret students are students of color. Pomfret has an endowment of \$68 million, and is able to award students \$5 million in need-based financial aid annually. Thirty-five percent of Pomfret students receive financial assistance.

In an increasingly competitive marketplace, Pomfret has seen increased inquiries and steady application numbers. The Head of School partners with the Dean of Enrollment Management to evaluate educational programs that impact retention and demand. By design, Pomfret enrolls a small ninth grade class of 50-60 students to be housed in dormitories along Freshman Circle, then welcomes new students each year to a class of approximately 135 in the senior/post-graduate year.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

Pomfret employs an experienced team of college counselors who offer Pomfret students a four-year college counseling curriculum and engage the entire community to provide students with the direction, advice, structure, and encouragement they need, including input from teachers, coaches, and advisors. The result of this carefully structured approach is a college placement rate of 100 percent, with the vast majority of applicants earning admission into one of their top college choices. Once at college, Pomfret students do well, with higher rates of achievement and lower rates of transfer than their peers.

FINANCES

Pomfret has been creative and vigilant in finding means to control costs while providing for the needs of all its faculty, staff, and students. Pomfret

has an operating budget of nearly \$24 million, and the majority of the budget (75 percent) is funded with net tuition revenues. The annual draw from the School's endowment contributes about 11 percent, while philanthropy in the form of the annual fund accounts for another 11 percent. The remaining funds come from auxiliary programs.

The School's \$145 million balance sheet has grown steadily with prudent fiscal operations, a focus on endowment growth through gifts, careful spending, and a long-term focus on investment returns. The School has recently funded two major capital projects (Health and Wellness Center and the soon-to-open Science Center) without adding to the School's \$22 million of long-term debt. Having been focused on fundraising for the Science Center for several years, the focus will shift to endowment fundraising when the new Head of School takes office.



HEAD OF SCHOOL

POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Pomfret seeks a Head of School who is a highly visible, lively, and engaged presence in the halls, classrooms, labs, dormitories, studios, and playing fields of the School, connecting with students, teachers, and staff members as well as parents and alumni scattered across the country and around the world. The next Head should be prepared to collaborate with this devoted school community to fulfill the school's mission and lead the school into the future by embracing current challenges and seizing new opportunities. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Mentoring a talented and eager administrative team and encouraging their professional development;
- Attracting and retaining a talented, devoted, and diverse faculty who embrace the joys and challenges of boarding life;
- Targeting outreach to prospective domestic and international boarding applicants to maintain a strong admissions profile in a shrinking market;
- Managing a creative balance between cherished traditions and thoughtful innovation;

- Re-establishing clear expectations for students and faculty post-pandemic and holding all accountable for those expectations;
- Executing a plan to strengthen equity and belonging for the entire school community;
- Building on a master plan to include the renovation of athletic facilities and dormitories, and attending to deferred maintenance as it presents itself;
- Creatively moving the School forward in the face of financial constraints and in competition with better endowed peers;
- Continuing the integration of competency-based learning while assessing its impact on outcomes;
- Developing a focused strategy to build an increasingly competitive and successful athletic program;
- Identifying and securing major gifts in anticipation of future needs, including capital projects and endowment growth;
- Strengthening ties between alumni and the school by increasing opportunities for authentic engagement.



HEAD OF SCHOOL POSITION STATEMENT

POMFRET

KEY QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Pomfret seeks a mission and values-driven leader who will embody and demonstrate most, if not all, of the following skills, qualities, characteristics, and experiences in no particular order. Pomfret seeks a leader who:

- Visibly models and can articulate the Pomfret mission and core values;
- Is a proven educational leader with a record of success
- Demonstrates self-awareness and deep humility;
- Is a positive role model but also sets high standards for others;
- Listens to hear, but not necessarily to reply;
- Is a visionary but also a manager and systems thinker;
- Is thoughtful, curious, and always learning;
- Possesses keen financial acumen and can also prioritize priorities;
- Understands boarding life, is accessible and a full participant in the school community;
- Has passion, enthusiasm, youthful energy and demonstrates a love for teenagers;
- Builds effective teams but also mentors individuals;
- Is kind, generous, empathetic, and, authentic;
- Has integrity and unquestioned principles:
- Is collaborative, yet also decisive;
- Is inclusive, unites and build bridges among and across constituencies;
- Is a clear communicator in writing and an engaging public speaker;
- Has high EQ and a sense of humor;
- Is comfortable traveling, friendraising, and fundraising.

"Pomfret has upped its game relative to innovative curriculum, student well being, facilities and financials. The school presents a platform for an inspired and energetic leader to build on this and take us to an even higher level."
–Pomfret Trustee

TO APPLY

Pomfret School has retained Resource Group 175 to support its search for a new Head of School. If you wish to submit your application, you may at: <https://rg175.com/candidates/signup>

Application includes:

- Letter of interest (cover letter)
- Resume or CV
- A writing sample of your choice
- Names of four current references and contact information (these references will not be contacted until the finalist stage of the process.)

The deadline for receipt of full application materials is Friday, May 10th.

The Pomfret Head of School Search Committee intends to interview semi-finalist candidates in late June. Finalists will be invited to campus for a 2-day visit in September. Please plan accordingly.

For any questions or further information about the position, please contact any of the consultants below:

Hamilton Clark
hamilton.clark@rg175.com, 484-576-0727

Marcia Prewitt Spiller
marcia.spiller@rg175.com, 404-406-3223

John Green
john.green@rg175.com, 609-937-2565