

DEAN OF ACADEMICS SEARCH

MARIN ACADEMY

San Rafael, California

ma.org

Start Date: July 2023



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Marin Academy asks every individual to think, question, and create in an environment of encouragement and compassion and challenges each person to accept the responsibilities posed by education in a democratic society.

At a Glance



Established
1971



Enrollment
448



Total Faculty
65



Student-faculty ratio
8.3:1



Students of color
35%



Financial aid awarded
\$4M



Faculty with advanced degrees
70%



Campus size
11-acres

Faculty of color: 34%

Students receiving aid: 20%

Endowment: \$18.3M

Annual operating budget: \$24M



Overview

“Think. Question. Create.” Marin Academy (MA) located in San Rafael, CA, just north of San Francisco, is a co-ed, day school serving students grades 9-12 and has long been a leader in progressive education. At present, MA is just over halfway through an ambitious strategic plan that emphasizes interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teaching and learning, competency-based education, and equity and inclusion.

Marin Academy seeks a visionary curricular and pedagogical leader to serve as Dean of Academics beginning July 1, 2023. The Dean of Academics is a senior leadership position that focuses on guiding and leading the School in its progressive educational model while helping it become a more equitable and inclusive institution. Reporting directly to the Head of School, the responsibilities of the Dean of Academics include leadership at the institutional, academic, administrative, and cultural levels of the School. Ideal candidates will be progressive educational leaders who have demonstrated experience with and commitment to competency-based education, strong facility in leading, managing, structuring, and supporting change, and a compassionate, collaborative, energetic, and community-oriented workstyle.



Opportunities and Challenges

Lead the work in progress

MA centers learning on five school-wide competencies: Demonstrated Empathy, Imaginative Curiosity, Intellectual Flexibility, Compelling Expression, and Strategic Boldness. Articulating, adopting, and integrating the competencies into the DNA of the MA has been a years-long collaboration as well as a source of institutional pride. With this framework in place and the work underway, the next Dean of Academics must possess a passion for competency-based, progressive pedagogy, a desire to continue to translate this work to all MA constituents, and the demonstrated leadership skills to push forward and bring others along.

Elevate signature programs

Transdisciplinary experiential learning is central to the MA experience, and the Transdisciplinary Leadership Program (TLP) has been launched. The heart of the TLP is a two-block course in which students explore the nuances and perspectives of a social issue and respond to it in partnership with outside organizations. Inquiry, outreach, and the ability to draw from multiple disciplines underpin other MA programs, including the Marin Academy Research Collaborative (MARC), and distinguish MA as a leader in world of progressive secondary education. The next Dean of Academics will support the continued development and refinement of such programs.

Manage the visionary and the day-to-day

The Dean of Academics manages a broad scope of responsibilities, from academic vision and curricular coherence to learning support systems to the master schedule. This leader must have the ability to move with ease between the wide-angle lens of strategic visioning and systems analysis to the narrower lens of showing up with empathy to navigate challenging situations with students, faculty, and parents.



Willingness to refine a work in progress

Change and innovation may bring unintended consequences, and the next Dean of Academics will embody Imaginative Curiosity and Intellectual Flexibility in order to frame and collaboratively interrogate thorny pedagogical issues as they arise. For example, how will the school manage the natural tension between benchmarks in a school calendar and the commitment to allowing students time and ample opportunities to demonstrate a given competency? What consistent practices will provide support for faculty and clarity for students? This leader must have the ability to hold and explore ambiguity as MA works through these kinds of compelling questions.

Support and manage a diverse team

The Dean of Academics supervises the Director of Learning Services, Registrar, Director of Technology, Director of College Counseling, and Library Director. Each direct report represents an important part of MA's academic program. The next Dean of Academics will seek to learn with and from their colleagues, to grow their understanding of these areas, and to provide the corresponding directors with the support and resources needed to continue to strengthen MA's educational program and support students and faculty.

Tell the story and know the audience

MA is pushing against the old ways of doing school, and each year new families, prospective families, new faculty, and new trustees will need to be educated about competency-based and transdisciplinary education. The Dean of Academics, along with other members of the Senior Leadership Team, must tell the why and how of this story. How does competency-based learning support academic rigor? What does current research add to this conversation? How do colleges respond to these approaches, and what do alumni say about their preparation for continued learning? The Dean of Academics must be a clear and compelling communicator with authentic passion and credibility.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The position requires someone with a deep, personal commitment to teaching excellence combined with a commitment to a progressive approach to curriculum and pedagogy. Marin Academy seeks candidates who are natural strategic thinkers and who possess high levels of emotional intelligence as well as excellent organizational and communication skills. The ideal candidate will offer most, if not all, of these characteristics:

- The flexibility and collaborative spirit necessary to partner with other members of the senior administrative team, teachers, and department heads;
- An attention to the systems and policies that enable Marin Academy to run effectively;
- Experience as a curricular leader, facilitating connections across divisions and departments;
- Classroom teaching experience and a track record of supporting and developing teaching faculty;
- A spirit of curiosity that fuels pursuit of evolving best practices and current research on curriculum and pedagogy;
- Personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the requisite skills to support critical conversations in the design of ever more inclusive culture, curriculum, pedagogy, and programs;
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate orally and in writing with inspiration and clarity to both internal and external audiences;
- A relational leadership style built on approachability, transparency, and responsiveness;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy, the tactical skills necessary to deftly manage the systems and processes necessary to implement strategy, the organizational fluency to manage multiple streams of information and respond to situations as they emerge;
- Experience recruiting, hiring, supporting, retaining, and leading talented, diverse, and mission-aligned faculty;
- The ability to navigate complexity, in part through effective prioritization, delegation, and management of systems;
- The confidence and humility to advocate for and embrace new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback;
- Joy and delight in working with teenagers and their families as well as the ability to set clear boundaries; and
- Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree strongly preferred.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Marin Academy.

[School Website](#)

[Virtual Campus Tour](#)

[The MA Competencies](#)

[School Profile](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Detailed Job Description](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

[About San Rafael, California](#)

[Signature Programs](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

Jennifer Wong Christensen

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