



Head of School Search: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Board of Trustees in the Head of School search process?

It is the responsibility of the Board to hire, support, and evaluate its sole employee, the Head of School. The Board will meet with finalists and review, then act on, the recommendation from the Search Committee. The Board's primary role is to advance the mission of Pathfinder and ensure the long-term viability and health of the school.

What is the role of the Search Committee?

The Search Committee will review candidate files, make reference calls, select and interview semifinalists and finalists, and recommend to the Board of Trustees the candidate they believe should be hired as the next Head of School.

How are people chosen for the Search Committee?

To ensure there is broad engagement and input from the entire Pathfinder community, we selected individuals with a breadth and depth of relationships with the school, including trustees, parents, faculty, and staff. Members are charged with holding the future of the school and its mission at the forefront, and it is our hope that collectively a wide range of perspectives and experiences will inform our discussions.

What if you don't find the right person?

We are optimistic that given the exciting opportunities this position offers we will attract highly skilled, passionate educators and successfully recruit the next head of The Pathfinder School. However, should we not identify that individual whom we feel brings the professional skills and personal attributes needed to lead the school, we will shift our search to interim leadership. This is not uncommon. We are committed to making every effort to secure our next Head of School in the coming months.

Will people other than the search committee get to meet the candidates?

Absolutely! Community input in this process is very important. The search committee will vet the initial pool of candidates and identify a group of semifinalists who will be interviewed in a confidential setting. This is done primarily to ensure that those potential candidates who have not yet informed their current schools of their possible interest in a career move will not be compromised by expressing interest in this position. The finalists—usually 2-3—will be invited to campus and have an opportunity to meet with members of the Pathfinder School community through a variety of venues and forums.

What are the criteria for making a decision about selecting the right person?

The search committee, in partnership with our consultant, is developing a position statement (*Information for Candidates*) that articulates the opportunities and challenges that await the new Head of School as well as the professional skills and personal characteristics we believe are most desirable and relevant to successfully lead Pathfinder. These will include an understanding of





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progressive, experiential education, demonstrated leadership experience, excellent communication skills, proven abilities in financial management, fundraising, communication and marketing, and a passion for The Pathfinder School mission.

There are great people already working at Pathfinder—wouldn't it be easier to choose someone here?

We are fortunate to have such a capable and committed group of professionals working at the school. We will encourage individuals who have an interest in the Head's role to apply for the position. All candidates will be considered and reviewed in the same manner—this is crucial to the integrity of the process and to ensure we select the individual we believe to be best suited to be the next leader of The Pathfinder School.

How long will this process take?

Like most independent schools, Pathfinder will engage in a thoughtful—and expedited—search and well-planned transition. We anticipate the following timeline:

Position posted	March 1, 2024
Application deadline	April 1, 2024
Semifinalist interviews	Mid-April
Finalist visits	Early May
Appointment	Late May/Early June
Start date	July 1, 2024

What if I know someone who may be interested?

Interested candidates should contact Tracy Bennett (tbennett@educatorscollaborative.com) of Educators Collaborative directly. She will maintain confidentiality for all recommended candidates. We also invite members of the community to make referrals of appropriate candidates. Please contact Tracy to share names and contact information of potential candidates, and she will reach out directly to them.

Are we only looking locally?

We are conducting a national search. While we know there are many talented education leaders locally, we also know that Pathfinder is an amazing school and the Grand Traverse Bay area is a wonderful place to live, so well qualified individuals from outside our region will likely be interested.

What if I have additional questions?

Feel free to contact our Search Committee chair, Brianne Allen at brianneva@gmail.com.



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