

CHESHIRE  
ACADEMY

1794

*FROM HERE TO ANYWHERE*



## HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

Position Starts July 1, 2025

Cheshire, Connecticut



**EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE**  
EXPERTS IN SEARCH, TRANSITION & STRATEGY

## MISSION

**Cheshire Academy is an internationally-minded college preparatory school that challenges its students to maximize their potential by developing the confidence, character, and critical thinking skills that enable them to thrive as global citizens.**

## HISTORY & SURROUNDINGS

Cheshire Academy (CA) is a college preparatory, coed boarding and day school for 362 students in grades 9-12 and postgraduates. Founded in 1794 as The Episcopal Academy of Connecticut, a boarding school for young men, it is one of the oldest boarding schools in the country. In the 19th century the school became co-educational, and, in spite of its affiliation with the Episcopal Church, allowed students to practice the religions of their families. In the 1850s it became the first private educational institution in the U.S. to accept international students. In 1917, the school once again became a single gender school for young men, focusing on preparing students for nearby Yale University. Coeducation returned to stay in 1969. Today, Cheshire Academy is a school of a little more than 360 young men and women from around the world who thrive in a close-knit and student-centered learning environment that prepares them to thrive as global citizens.

The historic 104-acre campus is nestled in the bucolic yet central town of Cheshire, Connecticut. This friendly and safe town of approximately 30,000 is just two hours from both Boston and New York and 30 minutes from both Hartford and New Haven. Rich in educational opportunities, Connecticut boasts 91 private schools, most of them within easy driving distance from Cheshire. Many colleges and universities, too, are in the area, such as Quinnipiac, Yale, Southern Connecticut State University, Trinity, Wesleyan, and many more. Similarly, there is a broad array of museums and cultural activities to take advantage of, as well as beautiful parks, hiking trails, and beaches all within an hour's drive.



### Pillars of Bowden

Bowden Hall, one of the oldest schoolhouses in continuous use in the United States, was constructed in 1796. Each of its eight pillars represents one of the core values of Cheshire Academy.

Cheshire Academy strives to uphold the values of belonging, collaboration, engagement, and growth. These core values are born of and buoyed by the simple yet powerful Pillars of Bowden:

**Respect • Responsibility • Caring • Civility  
• Citizenship • Morality • Fairness •  
Trustworthiness**





## FACTS ABOUT CHESHIRE ACADEMY

**Founded:** 1794

**Grades:** 9 - 12 and PG, coed

**Campus:** 104 acres

**Students:** 362

- Boarding: 56%
- Day: 44%
- Male: 52%
- Female: 47%
- Non-Binary: 1%
- Students of color: 34%
- States represented: 11
- Countries represented: 21

**Student to faculty ratio:** 7 to 1

**Average class size:** 10

**Tuition for 2024-25:**

- Boarding: \$62,475
- Day: \$32,498
- General fee: \$1,000 for 2024-25 year
- International student fee: \$10,000 for 2024-25 year

## ACADEMICS

One of Cheshire Academy's points of pride is that it takes students where they are and supports their growth in a multicultural, globally-minded environment. In all facets of life at CA, emphasis is placed on self-reflection about personal and academic growth. CA believes all students are unique individuals with their own interests, styles, and needs. Faculty are keen to ensure students have an active role and voice in their learning and take ownership over creating work that reflects their passions and evolving world views.

The academic calendar is organized on a two-semester system, and most students take five or six classes per semester. With a rotating schedule, each class meets approximately three times per week for an extended period of time. 143 courses are offered, grades 9 - PG.

The Academy adopted the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) in 2011. Its student-centered, interdisciplinary, and multi-modal approach and the philosophy behind it fit perfectly with the school's mission. Currently, 36 IB courses are offered to juniors and seniors, and approximately one-third of the senior class pursues the IB diploma. For more general information about the IB, please visit the [IBO website](#).

The Academic Office, strongly lauded by the faculty, is currently working on aligning curriculum and instruction to







the school's mission, working on assessment and grading practices to measure that alignment, and ensuring student agency to encourage an investment in *who you are now*.

## The Roxbury Academic Support Program

The Roxbury Academic Support Program, founded over 20 years ago, offers a unique and effective approach to supporting students. It has grown to meet the demands of secondary education and the evolving needs of today's students. The academic coaching model utilizes a robust theoretical framework and research-based practices tailored to the Cheshire Academy mission, approach to learning, and range of students at each grade level. The model includes five core components designed to empower students to discover, master, and utilize effective tools and strategies:

- Executive functioning skills building
- Learning strategies instruction
- One-on-one student-instructor sessions
- Goal-setting, assessment, progress monitoring
- Ongoing, two-way communication among all stakeholders

Students learn how to capitalize on their strengths, support areas of challenge, and become more productive learners. They may enroll in the program at one of three levels, all for an additional fee.

To learn more about the Roxbury Program, click [here](#).

## ATHLETICS AND AFTERNOON PROGRAMMING

The Cheshire Academy athletics program offers 17 competitive sports programs, as well as a range of non-competitive athletic activities. Students participate in a competitive team sport for two of the three seasons of every academic year as part of the school's afternoon program. Seventy percent of the student body participates in athletics. CA has long been known as a strong athletic school, winning over 15 athletic championships in the last ten years, including recent post-season appearances by football, softball, girls soccer, girls tennis and baseball. 38% of recent graduates have gone on to play at various





colleges, including Brown, Bucknell, Colgate, Columbia, Dartmouth, Fordham, Harvard, College of the Holy Cross, Lafayette, University of Michigan, Northeastern, Princeton, Stanford, The University of Alabama, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Yale. At the professional level, CA graduates have competed in the LPGA, NBA, NFL, Maccabiah Games, and the Olympics. The school rents out athletic venues over the summer, reaping an income of approximately \$50,000 annually.

Athletic competition includes Suffield Academy, Williston Northampton, The Gunn School, and Canterbury, among others. There is a current initiative to upgrade the school's Field House.

Students may choose other afternoon activities such as participating in robotics or a theater production. A fall play, winter musical, and student-led production in the spring are offered.

## CAMPUS LIFE / CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

CA's tight-knit and dynamic environment is rich in diversity. Domestic and international boarding and local day students become friends, teammates, and confidants who form lasting connections supported by intentional student life programming.

Community Dinners take place three or four times a year (typically on Sundays) and bring together the entire school for a meal, activity, and learning experience. Students and faculty sit at assigned tables, which helps them get to know peers and faculty they might not otherwise see often. Each dinner is with a new group and provides a new chance to get to know more community members.

Faculty members host trips to local attractions every weekend, including shopping centers, cinemas, museums, restaurants, and other great attractions. Students may also sign up for (and request) various activities, such as escape rooms, paintball, excursions to local beaches, community service opportunities, and college campus tours. Activities offered vary by weekend, and suggestions for both on-campus activities and off-campus excursions are encouraged.





There are also Community Weekends, each with a theme, which allow the community to address important issues and participate in educational experiences and fun activities. Recent themes have included International Celebration, Diversity and Inclusion, Service to Your Community, and Fall Festival.

There is a club available for everyone, with groups like the Eco Leaders, dedicated to advancing environmental sustainability; Student Ambassadors, who give tours to prospective students and show off their CA pride; the Paw Print student-run newspaper; and even the Candy Club, which explores candies from around the United States and around the world. There are also a number of affinity groups, such as The Diversity Group, Asian Student Union, Black Student Union, Gender/Sexuality Alliance, and others.

This year the Deans' Office has been working to strengthen the *adult culture of care* at all levels of a student's experience and plans to introduce several new programs/curricula next fall. For instance, the advisory program will provide a stronger onboarding year for ninth graders while offering mixed grade advisory groups for grades 10-12/PG. Res Life will differentiate its weekly programming, offering an introductory level curriculum to grades 9 and 10 and more advanced coverage of the same topics to grades 11, 12 and PG.

## Boarding Program

Boarding students have access to one of the best ways to prepare for life at college—through a safe environment to explore their independence and learn to take responsibility for their own lives. Living on campus helps students learn and grow in a supportive and empowering community.

Students enjoy a full-service dining facility, fitness center, study areas, student center, and the convenience of restaurants and grocery stores within walking distance.





There are five single-gender dormitories on campus, all of which are home to several faculty members and their families. Additional faculty members live in campus housing scattered throughout campus or live off-campus. Although each dorm differs in design, all living quarters for students have a main lounge area with a television. The majority of rooms are designed for two students, though there are some single and triple rooms also available.

To know more about boarding at CA, click [here](#).

## International Student Life

International students in the CA community represent more than 20 countries. They bring their perspectives into the classroom and daily life, enriching the experience for everyone in the community. Traditions and cultures are shared and celebrated among the entire school community.

Cheshire Academy's tradition of enrolling international students dates back to 1850. A comprehensive learning environment and support system for students and their families includes the following programs:

- ELL classes (also known as ESL)
- A private TOEFL testing site
- A dedicated International Student Office
- SEVIS/F-1 Visa and I-20 Support
- A Peer Counselor Program for new students
- Monthly orientation

## Day Student Life

Day students and their families are a vital part of the Academy community. Parents of day students are invited to get to know their children's advisers and to encourage their children to take full advantage of the Academy's academic, athletic, and social life. In addition to bonding during classes, sports, and activities, day students often host boarding students at their homes during the shorter vacations, or even just for a weekend away from campus.

Similarly, all day students are assigned a dorm, where they are able to spend a night on campus with boarders and get a taste of dorm life. Many day students take advantage of weekend and evening activities, trips to movies and shopping centers in the area, dinners out, or even just hanging out at the Student Center for an evening of foosball and television. All day students are welcome to enjoy all meals on campus, including breakfast, lunch, and dinner during the week. Some activities, like Community Weekends, are required for day students, as these weekends are designed to build community and school spirit. Day students are encouraged to attend Community Dinners with the boarding students and faculty, though these are not required.

To learn more about Campus Life, click [here](#).



## STUDENT HEALTH & SUPPORT

Cheshire Academy is dedicated to providing resources for student health and wellbeing. With the round-the-clock availability of nurses, counselors, and an off-site medical director, each student's health and safety are assured.

The Richmond Health Center is a licensed infirmary open to students seven days a week and is staffed by a professional team of registered nurses, a pediatric nurse practitioner, two certified athletic trainers, and three school counselors.



The Health Center coordinates appointments with medical specialists and provides transportation for students. Several large hospitals are located nearby for students who require emergency care or hospitalization. The Counseling and Wellness Center supports students through the daily stresses of adolescence. Students are welcome to use the center for issues ranging from peer and romantic relationships to roommate conflicts and daily concerns. If students have a greater need for therapy beyond the Center's capacity, they will be referred to a therapist in the area to better suit their needs.

The Director of Counseling coordinates any mental health services needed.



## COLLEGE COUNSELING

Cheshire Academy students benefit from a comprehensive, four-year college counseling process, dedicated to finding the right placement for each senior. Ninth graders benefit from conversation about the trajectory of high school. Sophomores are assigned to one of the three college counselors and work with them until their graduation, with each grade level building toward completed applications and eventual matriculation in the senior year.

Members of the Class of 2023 matriculated to 88 colleges and universities, primarily in the United States. The Ivies, state universities, art colleges, small and medium-sized liberal arts colleges, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are represented in this list.

Cheshire Academy's 2023-2024 school profile shared with colleges may be seen [here](#).

To learn more about CA's college counseling services, click [here](#).







## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Consistent with its history (coeducation, religious diversity, and an international student body in the 19th century), CA is proud of its ability to serve a diverse student body in every conceivable way. The community is committed to fostering an environment of belonging, safety, and connectedness that actively seeks to dismantle systems that favor one group over another.

Cheshire Academy inspires students to become curious about the world and encourages all community members to engage in a culture of open dialogue and courageous conversations. Using the school as a model of systems with its interdependent parts, CA seeks to raise confident global citizens of agency and humanity. A Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion supports the community through this work.



## SUSTAINABILITY

For CA to envision its next 200 years, the school community recognizes the need to put environmental sustainability at the forefront of education. Efforts to educate and support sustainability issues can be found in student leadership clubs, celebrations of Earth Day, energy saving investments, campus gardens and trails, and in class curricula.

Ongoing sustainability initiatives are designed to reduce the Academy's carbon footprint and to raise awareness about the importance of conserving the planet, including:

- Single-stream recycling system
- Bottle-filling water stations around campus
- Solar panels
- Green Move-Out in each dorm
- Textile recycling
- Used clothing racks in each dorm
- CA apparel and textbook buy-back and resell program (in the works)
- Composting system (in the works)
- Campus activities, including beach clean-ups and attending conferences on sustainability.





# ENROLLMENT

The Admission Office employs the equivalent of seven FTEs, including the director. In the words of the Director of Admission, “CA is the easiest school for Admissions to talk about.” The international program, the IB, CA’s global mindset, the Roxbury Program that seamlessly allows the school to serve a broad academic spectrum of students, and the close and caring culture of the school all add to this ease. Families are invited to engage with the school through Open Houses, on-campus tours and visits, Zoom interviews, and webinars.

In 2023-2024 Cheshire Academy enrolled 362 students, 56% of whom were boarding students; 44% day. The gender balance is close to equal, with 52% male, 47% female and 1% non-binary. 34% were students of color. 11 U.S. states were represented, as well as 21 countries. The school awarded about \$4.5 million for need-based financial aid, about \$1.5 million for merit-based aid, and just under \$500,000 for employee tuition remission, all to 145 students.

The acceptance rate for 2023-2024 was 69.3% with a 42.7% yield.

## Overview of 2023-2024 Enrollment

	Boys	Girls	Non-Binary
<b>Day students</b>	69	90	2
<b>5-Day Boarders</b>	28	14	0
<b>7-Day Boarders</b>	95	62	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>2</b>

Of the 7-day Boarders, 98 were international students.  
For more information about Admission, click [here](#).

The Academy has set a goal of 383 students for 2024-2025, and tuition and fees have been set for:

- Boarding: \$62,475
- Day: \$32,498
- General fee: \$1,000 for 2024-25 year
- International student fee: \$10,000 for 2024-25 year





## FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

Cheshire Academy operates on a budget of just under \$15 million and has a \$13 million endowment. An additional \$3 million is in reserves. CA carries \$84,000/year in debt service. The CFO leads CA's Business Office, overseeing an accountant and a controller.

The Advancement Office is composed of five people, including the director. On average, the Annual Fund raises \$800-900,000 each year. In 2022-2023 unrestricted gifts totaled \$864,417 from the following constituent groups:

Constituent Group	Percent of the group that participated	Percent of total unrestricted gifts to CA
Trustees	100%	20%
Current Parents/Guardians	40%	15%
Alumni	5%	49%
Faculty/Staff	100%	3%
Other sources (grandparents, foundations, etc.)	n/a	16%

In the same year gifts donated for restricted areas, capital projects, and the endowment brought the total amount raised (including the Annual Fund) to \$1,785,479. There have been several capital projects in play during and since COVID. A little over \$1.6 million has been raised to date toward a renovation of the Field House.



## FACULTY AND STAFF

Cheshire Academy employs 123 faculty and staff members, of whom 44 teach classes. The composition of the teaching staff is 82% White and 18% representing another race or ethnicity. 28 teachers have advanced degrees, and the full-time faculty average 17 years of teaching experience and teach an average of 60 students per semester. The average class size is 10.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Leadership Team is made up of six senior administrators: the Head of School, Associate Head, CFO, Director of Admission, Director of Human Resources, and Director of Advancement. This group meets three times a week: twice for a 30-minute check-in and once for a more structured 90-120-minute meeting. They generally have their own retreat in June and have also attended the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools' (CAIS) annual Leadership Conference together.

The Leadership Team has recently invited additional administrators to attend "Program Leadership Team" meetings. This group includes representatives from Athletics, Academics, and Student Life.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The current Board of Trustees numbers 15 members and the Head of School who serves ex officio, as well as five Trustees Emeriti. There are five trustees of color and two international trustees. Trustees may serve two four-year terms before stepping off for at least one year.

Standing committees of the Board include: Executive, Finance, Audit, Trusteeship and Governance, Enrollment, Advancement, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The Board meets three times a year, including the Annual Meeting, often held on Graduation weekend.

The last re-accreditation took place in 2018, just as the last Strategic Plan came to a close. The Board looks forward to building a new vision and subsequent plan with the next Head of School.







## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Cheshire Academy Board of Trustees has launched the search to replace the current Head of School, Julie Anderson, who will be heading to a new adventure at the end of what will be eight years as Head and a total of 22 years at the school. A dedicated advocate of CA, Julie is eager to support the transition into new leadership.

Nat Conard, Mary Seppala, and Sally Mixsell of Educators Collaborative, LLC are assisting the Board in this search. Based on a community-wide survey and a two-day visit designed to learn about the school and interview many of its key stakeholders, Nat, Mary, and Sally offer the descriptors below that represent community-wide sentiments about Cheshire Academy's strengths, the challenges and opportunities lying ahead, and the skills and attributes desired in the next Head of School.

### Strengths of the School

- Deeply committed, creative, and caring faculty and staff
- Tight-knit community where students are known and given agency to determine their own growth through thoughtful reflection
- The school's commitment to maintaining and building a diverse and inclusive community, preparing students to live in a world of interconnectedness and change
- The lengthy tenures of many employees, contributing to the continuity of CA's internal culture of warmth and belonging
- A legacy and ongoing tradition of strong athletics and impressive athletic facilities
- A four-year college counseling program that effectively matches each student with schools that are aligned with their strengths and interests
- The thoughtfully designed academic program and programs that support student success (e.g., IB, Roxbury learning support, health and wellness support, res life curriculum), all aligned with the mission of the school



## Opportunities for the New Head of School

- Strengthen lines of communication and transparency in all directions, helping clarify expectations and outcomes
- Fundraising
  - » Continue to build a community of robust giving from all constituent bases
  - » Leverage the arrival of a new Head of School to engage and excite the CA community
- Create, in partnership with the Board, a new strategic plan that will address some, if not all, of the issues below:
  - » A review of the Cheshire Academy brand: Whom do we best serve? What do we do best? How can we talk about it to help others engage with us?
  - » A clear definition of the school's commitment to athletics
  - » A campus master plan to address and prioritize facility needs, whether renovation projects or new building
  - » Recruit and retain CA's excellent faculty and staff
  - » Reconnect with the strong and rich history of the school, building and/or resuscitating enduring traditions
  - » Grow the endowment and identify additional revenue streams
- Support the exciting and meaningful work being done in the Student Life and Academic departments
- Continue to develop the social-emotional health and wellness curriculum, identified by the faculty and staff as a greatest need

## Attributes & Experience Desired In The New Head

- A confident, self-aware, and decisive leader who will move ahead courageously and in strong partnership with the Board to set the future course of Cheshire Academy
- An experienced leader with a global perspective who can navigate the complexities of a multicultural boarding and day school
- A strategic leader who is committed to collaborating with the Board to address issues related to admissions, finance, and sustainability of Cheshire Academy
- A culturally competent leader who can draw constituents into meaningful dialogue related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
- An effective communicator who understands the importance of transparency and welcomes the engagement of multiple voices in problem-solving
- A leader who has demonstrated vision and creativity to address challenging issues
- A leader who can passionately articulate the value of a CA education and will be intentional and results-oriented in garnering alumni and parent support for the school
- A visible and approachable leader who will fully engage in campus life and lead with care, not personal ambition
- Experience with strategic planning, a plus





## TO APPLY

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials in a single merged document, in the order listed:

- EC Candidate Summary Sheet (Contact a consultant, below, for this document)
- Letter of Interest, addressed to the Cheshire Academy Search Committee
- Current résumé
- Statement of Educational Leadership philosophy
- A list of five or more references with contact information (including phone numbers and email addresses)
- EC Disclosure Form (Contact a consultant, below, for this document)



### Please Address Inquiries to :

Nat Conard, Partner, Educators Collaborative  
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and/or

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We encourage candidates to reach out to us for a preliminary conversation, if desired, before submitting their materials.

The Search Committee expects to complete the search by **Fall 2024**.

## Equal Opportunity Statement

*Cheshire Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy applies to, but is not limited to, educational policies, admission, financial aid, hiring and employment practices, use of school facilities, athletics, and other school-administered programs.*

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