



Shady *School*  
Hill



**CHIEF FINANCIAL AND OPERATING OFFICER**

*Cambridge, Massachusetts*

**Start Date: July 1, 2026**



*Educators Collaborative is pleased to be assisting Shady Hill School in their search for a Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO) to begin on July 1, 2026.*

## **A DYNAMIC OPPORTUNITY TO STEWARD FINANCIAL EXCELLENCE AND ADVANCE OPERATIONAL STRATEGY**

Shady Hill School, widely respected within the independent school community and recognized nationally for its enduring excellence, seeks a seasoned financial and operations professional to serve as its next Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO). This is a compelling opportunity for a strategic, community-attuned, and operationally astute finance and operations executive who excels at building strong systems, leading teams, and serving as a trusted thought partner to the Head of School—helping to guide school-wide decision-making with integrity, clarity, transparency, and foresight. The successful candidate will bring the ability to partner with all members of the Shady Hill community, providing strategic expertise and a collaborative spirit.

The ideal candidate will combine deep financial expertise with strong operational leadership and the presence to support a passionate and strong leadership team—while also embracing the day-to-day rhythm of school life. An ability to build and refine systems, develop and execute master planning initiatives, and translate strategy into operational excellence will be essential. Equally important is the capacity and disposition to connect with educators, fellow administrators, Board members, students, and families, leading with professionalism and integrity, and a steady hand. A finance and operations professional with high emotional intelligence and a proven track record of close collaboration with colleagues will thrive in this position. With an outstanding reputation, solid financial capacity, a long-tenured and highly respected Head, and a deeply committed community as its foundation, Shady Hill offers the opportunity to make a lasting impact at a school poised to build thoughtfully on its strengths while advancing an ambitious, forward-looking vision.



## MISSION

Shady Hill School fosters joyful, active learning informed by multiple perspectives—empowering students to be intellectually adventurous and wholeheartedly just.

## A DISTINGUISHED AND DISTINCTIVE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL ROOTED IN TRADITION AND ORIENTED TOWARD THE FUTURE

Shady Hill School has served generations of children and families since its founding in 1915. Established as the first independent coeducational elementary school in the Boston area, the school's progressive roots came from the founding families' enthusiasm for the writings of John Dewey and other leading educators of the time. The founders were committed to the use of original source materials, a "spirit of simplicity and devotion to learning," and the idea of freedom coupled with responsibility. The school's progressive teaching philosophy has attracted a succession of master-teachers to its faculty and generations of devoted parents to its constituency.

In 1926, the school moved to its present location on Coolidge Hill in Cambridge. Over the next century, Shady Hill had grown to its present enrollment of 530 students.

From its earliest days, the school embraced progressive ideals—encouraging independence, fostering curiosity, and building a sense of responsibility and respect in even the youngest learners. The school cultivates independence, intellectual curiosity, and social responsibility in students from preschool through middle school. With full enrollment, a healthy financial foundation including a significant endowment, and deep community loyalty, Shady Hill is entering an exciting chapter. Both the school's long-tenured Head and the leadership team is talented and respected, and the CFOO is integral to all aspects of school life—honoring the school's mission and roots while providing strategic advice on Shady Hill's future.

## Beliefs

- Play and discovery are central to every child's growth, and true exploration takes time
- The purpose of knowledge is to create meaning, develop understanding, and inspire action.
- Growing up is a nuanced process, and mistakes are catalysts for deeper learning and progress.
- A strong, interdependent community is the framework for academic confidence and social and emotional health.
- Practicing genuine kindness towards oneself and others helps build a compassionate world.
- We have a responsibility—as individuals and as a community—to honor difference, challenge prejudice, and strive for racial and social justice.



## THE CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING AREA

Shady Hill's campus is unlike that of any other PK-8 independent school. Eighteen buildings are spread over the 11-acre campus, creating what many describe as the feel of a small village. The individual gray-shingled classroom buildings house each grade level and surround a central green, where the community gathers for important school events each spring. The buildings' porches invite outdoor reading, conversation, and gathering during recess and throughout the day.

In fact, the entire campus functions as a classroom. From Shady Hill's youngest to its oldest grades, students explore the flora and fauna of the campus, use the space for representations of thematic and central subject studies, and much more.

The school is located in the Coolidge Hill section of Cambridge, a quiet triumph of New England charm and intellectual vitality. Perched gracefully above the bustle, it offers leafy streets, historic homes, and a sense of calm that feels worlds away while remaining moments from the energy of nearby Boston.

With its proximity to the scholarly pulse of Harvard University and the innovation hub of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Coolidge Hill embodies the rare blend of serenity and stimulation. Residents enjoy walkable access to parks, local cafés, and cultural treasures, all framed by classic architecture and a strong sense of community. It is a neighborhood that feels both rooted in history and alive with possibility—a place where refinement, convenience, and character meet.

Nestled within this residential setting, Shady Hill is not only located in Coolidge Hill but very much a part of it. The school's presence is thoughtfully integrated into the life of the neighborhood, requiring ongoing partnership, respect, and attentiveness to the rhythms and needs of the surrounding community.



## **OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL FACTS AND FIGURES**

In addition to the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer, Shady Hill's business office staff includes the Controller, Human Resources Director, Accounts Payable Specialist, Payroll and General Accountant, and the Director of Student Accounts and Assistant Director of Financial Aid.

The school's annual budget is approximately \$35 million; about 77% of revenue is generated by net tuition receipts. Shady Hill's endowment currently totals approximately \$83 million. The school raises about \$2 million each year from its annual fund and fundraising events and carries approximately \$18 million of debt. Total enrollment is currently full at 530 students, a figure that has been steady for many years. The school also administers employee health benefits through a self-insurance model, which presents ongoing considerations for financial oversight and long-term planning.

As the above suggests, the school's current financial drivers are robust and sustainable.

## **GOVERNANCE & BOARD PARTNERSHIP**

Shady Hill is governed by an engaged Board of Trustees that partners closely with the Head of School and senior leadership to steward the school's long-term vitality. The Board maintains a strong fiduciary culture supported by well-defined committee structures that ensure thoughtful financial and operational oversight.

Financial governance is led by a Finance Committee, which oversees budgeting, financial reporting, and long-range planning. A separate Investment Committee (whose members are not trustees) focuses on endowment stewardship, working with a contracted investment advisory firm to guide strategy; investment decisions are executed by the school's internal financial team in alignment with established policies. The Board also maintains an Audit and Risk Management Committee for independent financial review and risk oversight, and a Buildings & Grounds Committee to support facilities stewardship and campus master planning.

The CFOO plays a central role in supporting these committees—serving as a trusted thought partner, ensuring transparency, and translating strategic priorities into disciplined operational execution in close partnership with the Head of School.



## **THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME SHADY HILL SCHOOL'S NEXT CHIEF FINANCIAL AND OPERATING OFFICER**

Shady Hill School has launched a national search to identify its next Chief Financial and Operating Officer, who will assume responsibilities no later than July 1, 2026. This represents a compelling opportunity for a strategic, values-aligned finance and operations executive to shape the role, maintain strong systems, and guide the school's financial and operations future in close partnership with the Head of School.

As a key member of the school's senior leadership team, the CFOO will oversee budgeting and forecasting, financial reporting and compliance, investment, risk management, and the supervision of the Business Office, Buildings and Grounds, Security, Information Technology, Transportation and Logistics, Food Service, and HR staff. In addition to driving financial strategy and overseeing all non-academic operations at the school, the CFOO will serve as a key advisor and collaborator with the Head of School and be a thought partner to leaders across the school, including those in Enrollment Management and Advancement.

This is a highly visible and relational role within a school community that values professionalism, transparency, collaboration, and integrity. The next CFOO will be expected to engage with staff, families, trustees, and faculty with both clarity and warmth, bringing sound judgment, operational agility, foresight, and a genuine appreciation for the school environment.

Carol Santos and George Sanderson of Educators Collaborative, LLC, are assisting Shady Hill School in this search. Based on a comprehensive site visit and conversations with key stakeholders, Carol and George have gathered the following themes that reflect the community's shared perspective on the school's strengths, the leadership qualities most needed in this role, and the opportunities that lie ahead for the next CFOO.

## Strengths of the School

Shady Hill is justifiably proud of its strong sense of community, educational legacy, and dedicated leadership. Across multiple conversations, faculty, staff, trustees, and parents described the school as a place of deep belonging—where families and staff are united by shared values, and where the school’s distinct culture, traditions, and philosophy inspire both academic excellence and a profound respect for the whole child.

Shady Hill is deeply respected in the independent school world and has a strong foundation for identifying and advancing strategic priorities. The school enjoys stable enrollment, a robust wait list, and a healthy financial position. At the same time, its leadership team and Board have embraced the need for a more intentional focus on long-term financial strategy around the maintenance and enhancement of its campus and clear, transparent organizational structures to support disciplined management, effective communication, thoughtful growth, and long-term sustainability.

### Key strengths and opportunities identified during our visit include:

- A long-tenured Head supported by a committed and talented leadership team. Head of School Mark Stanek has served in this role for over 15 years, guiding the school over that time with professionalism and vision. The senior administrative team is energetic, mission-driven, and highly engaged. They bring strong instincts and a collaborative spirit to their roles, and value continued financial expertise and guidance from the CFOO. At the same time, they seek a partnership that respects their expertise, particularly in education and child development, in financial and operational decision-making. In this context, the next CFOO will be a trusted thought partner, helping to shape school-wide strategy and embedding financial acumen across all areas of operations, enrollment, technology, advancement, and HR.
- Financially, the school is on very solid ground, with a robust endowment and strong tuition revenue supported by consistent, full enrollment. The next CFOO will be a key strategist in helping to articulate and implement a long-range campus master plan, providing a disciplined framework for both planned improvements and the inevitable reactive needs of facilities stewardship.

## AT A GLANCE

- **Name:** Shady Hill School
- **Location:** Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States
- **Type:** Co-ed Day School, PK - grade 8
- **Founded:** 1915
- **Enrollment:** 530
- **Faculty:** Approximately 90+ teachers
- **Student-Teacher Ratio:** Approximately 8:1
- **Campus Size:** About 11 acres of wetlands, grassy areas, and pathways
- **Setting:** A “village-style” setting with around 18–19 buildings including classrooms, science labs, art, woodshop & music studios, library, gym, assembly hall, and a STEAM space called the “Hub.”
- **Annual Budget:** Approximately \$35 million
- **Endowment:** Approximately \$83 million
- **Revenue:** 77% of revenue is generated by net tuition receipts
- **Fundraising:** The school raises about \$2 million each year from its annual fund and fundraising events
- **Debt:** The school carries approximately \$18 million of debt.
- **Accreditation & Membership:** Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE) & National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)

**Shady Hill School is searching for a Chief Financial and Operating Officer with start date of July 1, 2026.**

- A culture of collaboration and trust. The community values honesty, professionalism, and shared purpose. Transparency and clarity are highly prized in communications, especially in moments of institutional change, and the next CFOO will be expected to lead communications with integrity, empathy, and thoughtful explanation.
- A talented and engaged Board of Trustees, who bring a clear sense of fiduciary responsibility and are eager to work with a strategic partner who can help translate the school's aspirations into sound financial plans. The Board supports the Head's vision while also relying on the strategic insight and counsel of the CFOO to inform thoughtful investment in infrastructure, campus safety, and staff.
- Enrollment is strong, with opportunities to enhance support and strategy. Shady Hill is fully enrolled and enjoys an outstanding reputation in the local market. At the same time, there is continued attention to enhancing the business office's customer service orientation, ensuring a seamless experience for prospective families and thoughtful alignment of financial aid and re-enrollment contract timelines.
- Experienced, capable, and collaborative Business, IT, and Facilities team of leaders who bring a wealth of institutional and professional knowledge. A well-regarded Controller oversees the finance team, the annual audit process and supports the CFOO on the Board Finance, Audit and Investment committees. The Director of Facilities is a licensed general contractor, adding decades of experience both at the school and in the local contracting market. Likewise, the IT Director combines a depth of expertise in managing both the academic and non-academic IT responsibilities at Shady Hill and locally.





## OPPORTUNITIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

Reporting directly to the Head of School and serving as a trusted advisor to the Board on financial, operational, and strategic matters, the CFOO holds the following responsibilities and opportunities for leadership:

- **Strategic Partnership with the Head of School:** Serve as a trusted advisor to Mark Stanek, providing financial and operational insight and direction to inform decision-making, campus master planning, and organizational alignment around priorities and trade-offs. This partnership is essential to shaping the school's next chapter.
- **Financial Strategy and Oversight:** Manage robust financial systems, including multi-year forecasting, annual budgeting, cash flow planning, investment management, and risk mitigation. Partner with the Investment Committee to manage the endowment and implement investment decisions.
- **Facilities and Capital Planning Insight:** Partner with the Director of Facilities and the Board's Buildings & Grounds Committee to review ongoing maintenance planning, develop a campus master plan, and help evaluate future capital priorities from a financial and operational perspective.
- **Business Office and HR Leadership:** Lead and develop a dedicated Business Office team, ensuring strong financial operations, disciplined audit processes, and effective oversight of HR functions—including compliance, insurance, benefits, and compensation administration. With a focus on professionalism, clear communication, and trust, the CFOO will foster a responsive and accessible office that delivers timely, transparent, and respectful service to families, faculty, and staff, reinforcing a culture of accountability and belonging.

- **Operations, Technology, and Facilities Leadership:** Oversee a strong operations team, including a highly experienced Director of Facilities, in stewarding the school’s aging, multi-building campus and its relationship with the surrounding residential neighborhood. This includes long-range facilities planning, ongoing maintenance and capital improvements, ongoing technology integration, and ensuring a safe, well-managed environment for students and staff.
- **Campus Safety & Security:** Following significant recent investments in upgraded security systems, fencing, and protocols, the CFOO will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these enhancements and partner closely with the Director of School Safety to assess impact, strengthen practices, and identify additional improvements as needed.
- **Transportation & Logistics:** Provide oversight of the school’s transportation program, including seven leased buses operating on school-developed routes, ensuring safety, efficiency, regulatory compliance, and alignment with community needs.
- **Auxiliary & Operational Programs:** Oversee and evaluate the school’s lunch program for staff and the pilot student lunch program, assessing financial sustainability, operational effectiveness, and alignment with broader community expectations.
- **Board Committee Support and Partnership:** Provide Board committees (particularly Finance, Audit and Risk Management, Investment, and Buildings and Grounds) with timely, accurate, clearly designed reports and information that support their strategic work and fiduciary role. The CFOO will have regular interaction with trustees on financial and operational matters and strategy, and will often take a leadership role in committee meetings.
- **Cross-Functional & Institutional Partnership:** Serve as a visible and engaged leader across campus, working closely with colleagues in Advancement, Enrollment, Academics, and Operations to ensure that financial stewardship meaningfully supports institutional priorities. Partner with Enrollment and Academic leaders to provide sound financial modeling and sustainable practices that reinforce full enrollment, strong retention, and long-term programmatic vitality. Collaborate closely with the Advancement Office to support accounting, reconciliation, and gift collection procedures, and provide strategic financial guidance as the school builds on the success of its Annual Fund and capital campaign initiatives.
- **Budgeting and Community Education:** Lead the development of annual and long-term budgets, bringing more clarity to the school’s financial model and its key drivers. As financial decisions often accompany institutional change, the CFOO will play a key role in guiding the community through transitions—communicating clearly, sequencing decisions thoughtfully, and helping stakeholders understand both the rationale and implications of systemic change. Educate staff, trustees, and the broader community on how financial decisions are made, what assumptions underpin them, and how those decisions support the school’s long-term sustainability.

This is a multifaceted leadership opportunity for a strategic, collaborative finance and operations executive who enjoys maintaining systems, managing a dynamic environment, educating partners, and serving a mission they believe in. The successful candidate will bring not only technical skill but also clarity, warmth, and a genuine commitment to community.



## SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES OF THE NEXT CHIEF FINANCIAL AND OPERATING OFFICER

Shady Hill seeks a strategic, relational, and operationally savvy finance executive to serve as its next CFOO. The school values integrity, professionalism, community, and mission alignment and seeks a leader who shares these commitments and brings strong financial acumen to a dynamic educational environment.

The successful candidate will be energized by the opportunity to shape systems, develop strategy, manage projects, educate colleagues, support the Board, and help drive the school's long-term sustainability in close partnership with the Head of School and other members of the senior leadership team.

### **The ideal candidate will demonstrate many of the following qualifications, skills, and attributes:**

- Bachelor's Degree required; MBA or CPA or advanced degree in a related field is preferred.
- At least 8–10 years of progressively responsible experience in financial leadership roles; prior experience in an independent school or mission-driven nonprofit is strongly preferred.
- Ability to thrive within the culture of a not-for-profit independent school while advancing sound operational strategy, paired with high emotional intelligence and the capacity to engage respectfully with staff, trustees, families, neighbors, and external partners.
- Disciplined operational and project management ability who can evaluate and improve systems for efficiency, clarity, and service, while balancing multiple priorities with rigor and attention to detail.
- Progressive leadership experience overseeing personnel and multiple initiatives, supported by strong management, negotiation, and project execution skills.
- Strong budgeting leadership supported by clear processes and communication, strategic experience in forecasting, cash flow planning, investments, audit oversight, and risk management.

- Strong working knowledge of accounting principles (GAAP) and nonprofit/fund accounting, along with demonstrated proficiency in financial and operational systems, software, and technology platforms.
- Comfort with leading compensation strategy and analysis and supporting the Board and Head of School in aligning compensation practices with school values and resources.
- Outstanding verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills with the ability to convey complex financial information clearly and transparently to diverse audiences.
- An open, collegial leadership style that fosters collaboration across departments, along with a positive presence and a sense of humor that contributes to a strong and supportive workplace culture.
- A high level of integrity, sound judgment, and a strong work ethic, along with a demonstrated commitment to managing confidentiality appropriately, fiduciary responsibility, and careful handling of sensitive matters.
- Flexibility with working evenings, weekends, and holidays as needed, with a willingness to be visibly present and supportive at school events and community activities.

A complete, detailed job description is available to candidates upon their application for this position. Base salary range for this position is expected to be \$275,000-\$325,000, depending on experience and qualifications.

## HOW TO APPLY

Applications will be reviewed when they are received.

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

- [EC Candidate Summary Sheet](#) (you'll be asked to make a copy upon opening)
- Letter of interest, addressed to the Head of School
- Current résumé
- A list of five or more references with contact information (including phone numbers and email addresses)
- [Disclosure Form](#) (you'll be asked to make a copy upon opening)

### Please send applications and address inquiries to:

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