



CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

[DEERFIELD ACADEMY](#)

Deerfield, Massachusetts



DEERFIELD ACADEMY

The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Deerfield Academy in the search for a Chief Advancement Officer.

The Chief Advancement Officer will provide leadership and strategic vision for all aspects of the Academy's fundraising activities and constituent relationships, ensuring that the Office of Advancement effectively engages Deerfield's alumni, parents, and friends with the school and raises the financial resources required to achieve the Academy's goals.

Chartered in 1797, Deerfield Academy is an independent secondary school that is home to 663 students in grades 9-12. Located in Western Massachusetts, Deerfield is committed to high standards of scholarship, citizenship, and personal responsibility. Through a rigorous liberal arts curriculum, extensive co-curricular program, and supportive residential environment, the Academy encourages each student to develop an inquisitive and creative mind, sound body, and strong moral character. This deep commitment to the student experience is exemplified by Deerfield's 136 faculty, most of whom live on campus. The student-to-faculty ratio is 5:1.

Set in a historic village bounded by river, hills, and farms, Deerfield inspires reflection, study, and play, abiding friendships, and a defining school spirit. A vibrant, ethical community that embraces diversity, the Academy prepares students for leadership in a rapidly changing world that requires global understanding, environmental stewardship, and dedication to service.

Each year, Deerfield receives more than 2,000 applications and enrolls fewer than 700 students. The majority of students are boarded, while a smaller percentage are day students. They hail from 47 countries and 35 states. With over \$12 million available, 37% of students receive some form of financial aid. The current class make-up is 50% girls, 50% boys, 14% foreign nationals, and 44% who self-identify as people of color.

The student experience is underscored by a profound sense of history and tradition. Seven days a week, the students gather in the dining hall for a family-style meal. Nine students and one faculty member eat at each round table, which creates the opportunity for deeper connections between members of the community.

The Deerfield experience solidifies lifelong bonds among the students and to the institution. More than 12,000 alumni reside in over 25 countries, and many are at the top of their respective industries. In fiscal year 2021, the Advancement Office raised \$39.6 million in cash, including \$6.3 million for the annual fund. Parent fundraising accounts for approximately 35% of gift revenue. Deerfield has placed first or second in alumni participation among the Eight Schools for the past five years. Planned giving plays a significant role in Deerfield's fundraising success with over 600 members of the Boyden Society.

DEERFIELD ACADEMY LEADERSHIP

Dr. John P.N. Austin

Head of School

Dr. John P.N. Austin became Deerfield Academy's 56th Head of School in July of 2019. Prior to Deerfield, Dr. Austin served as Headmaster at King's Academy in Madaba, Jordan, and before that as Academic Dean at St. Andrew's School in Middletown, Delaware, where he joined the faculty in 1987.

A graduate of Williams College, Dr. Austin holds a Master of Arts, Master of Philosophy, and Doctoral degrees in English and Comparative Literature from Columbia University, along with a master's degree from the Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College.

Dr. Austin is committed to creating and sustaining vibrant educational communities that honor student initiative, creativity, and wellness; and to school cultures that foster supportive, caring relationships between adults and young people within a culture of respect, clear values, diversity, inclusion, and educational opportunity.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Chief Advancement Officer will report to Head of School, Dr. John P.N. Austin. The Chief Advancement Officer will oversee a staff of 30, including professional staff members and administrative support personnel.

STATEMENT FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL DR. JOHN P.N. AUSTIN

As Deerfield prepares to celebrate its 225th anniversary, the search for our new Chief Advancement Officer comes at an auspicious moment. By any metric, Deerfield is positioned as one of the leading independent schools in the country. Parents and alumni have been galvanized by our successful response to the pandemic, as we quickly returned to in-person teaching and learning while many of our peer schools remained remote, and we have established an educational approach that uniquely fuses our commitments to creating an inclusive and caring residential community with our long standing commitment to the liberal arts as a source of wisdom and life-long learning. The dedication of our faculty and staff has been inspiring during the past two years, and we continue to build upon the goodwill engendered during the pandemic, a balanced and thoughtful approach to the cultural and political upheaval of the last two years, and the intergenerational strength and resiliency of the Academy.

The culture of the Advancement Office, led skillfully by retiring Chief Advancement Officer, Ann Romberger, is collaborative, team-based, and purposeful. I look for a colleague with a proven track record as a fundraiser, organizational leader, and strategist who will build upon the successes of the last years and lead our next campaign for Deerfield. We seek someone who is authentic and relationship-focused, who understands Deerfield's unique place in the history of American, independent school education, and whose strength is developing relationships across our alumni and parent constituency.

The next Chief Advancement Officer will serve as a trusted colleague on the School's senior leadership team and work collaboratively and closely with a Board of Trustees distinguished by its dedication, wise decision-making, and culture of strong governance. In this current environment, the successful candidate must be a team player who is nimble and creative in responding to complex issues. The culture of philanthropy at Deerfield could not be stronger at this moment, and I look forward to building upon that momentum.

– Head of School, Dr. John P.N. Austin

DEERFIELD ACADEMY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

In his 2021 Fall Family Weekend remarks, Head of School, Dr. John P.N. Austin said that “inclusion—the art of creating a powerful sense of community that recognizes and honors each student’s individuality and imparts to them a full and equal sense of belonging—is the foundation of Deerfield’s work as a school, and it’s a collective undertaking. Fundamentally, inclusion is about the kinds of relationships created as adults with students, and the kinds of relationships students forge—across race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and socio-economics—with one another: in the Academy’s dorms, on its fields and performance stages, and in—and outside of—its classrooms. It is about the quality of its advising, mentoring, coaching, and teaching—the quality of the relationships it creates each day with students in all of its interactions with them.” You can read the full text of his remarks [here](#).

The Academy’s [update on inclusion and community life](#) outlines two broad goals. The first is to sustain and deepen a climate where all Deerfield students can thrive and flourish in a community of respect and care for one another. The second is to intentionally support a learning culture that honors the disparate beliefs of a diverse and dynamic student body drawn from across the United States and around the globe. This includes a commitment to free and open inquiry, and to expressive freedom—a freedom that includes ideas and opinions that some may consider disagreeable, unwelcome, or unpopular.

Learn more about Deerfield Academy's commitment to inclusion and community life [here](#).

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Guidance of Advancement Program

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- build upon the success of the current advancement program, managing the work of principal and leadership gifts, annual fund, gift planning, alumni relations, and advancement services;
- work closely with the Head of School and Finance Office on setting fundraising goals and achieving those objectives;
- strengthen relationships with existing donors and work with Advancement Research to identify and cultivate potential new prospective donors;
- ensure that the Academy’s stewardship of donors makes supporting Deerfield a personally fulfilling experience while demonstrating the impact their contributions have on the institution;
- work with the Communications Office to ensure all fundraising materials and outreach efforts are consistent with the Academy’s culture, messaging, and branding; and
- collaborate with colleagues in information technology to improve database management.

Fundraising

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- personally cultivate and successfully solicit major and principal gifts from a portfolio of alumni, parents, trustees, and other donors and prospective donors;
- develop a deep understanding of Deerfield’s funding needs and be able to articulate those priorities in clear and compelling language to donors, as well as prepare proposals and correspondence as follow-up to those conversations;
- work with the senior team of the Office of Advancement to organize and execute donor society recognition events, building dedications, and other major donor stewardship events; and
- travel widely on behalf of the Academy, building a broad network of relationships with alumni, parents, trustees, and other donors and prospective donors.

Alumni and Parent Engagement

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- in conjunction with alumni relations staff members, develop and implement a strategic plan for engaging alumni and parents—including the Academy’s diverse constituencies—and develop ways to engage them both personally and philanthropically;
- ensure that existing alumni relationships are deepened and maintained, while seeking out relationships with those not currently engaged;
- oversee all Advancement on-campus and off-campus events, including Commencement, Reunion, and Family Weekends; and
- ensure that programs and initiatives, opportunities for volunteer participation, and the goals and aspirations set forth by the Academy are known to the alumni body—and work with the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association to promote those goals.

Management of Staff

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- set clear direction and priorities for the Office of Advancement and promote a culture of mentoring staff members;
- recruit experienced frontline fundraisers to fill key roles on the leadership gifts team;
- identify best practices of advancement work and provide managers with useful metrics;
- assist supervisors with the development of effective management strategies and performance evaluation tools, and foster professional development among staff members;
- promote a culture of excellence in which teamwork, collaboration, and creativity are recognized and rewarded; and
- lead by example with regard to professionalism, mutual respect, a positive outlook, and good humor.

Engagement of Academy Leaders

The Chief Advancement Officer will

- guide and support the Head of School in their role as a key fundraiser, serving as co-strategist on the cultivation and solicitation of principal gifts, and ensuring that the Head of School is well-briefed and that their time spent is highly productive and professionally rewarding;
- provide support to the trustees and volunteer leadership for their activities on behalf of Deerfield, ensuring that their connections to the Academy remain strong and productive;
- support the work of the Advancement and Nominating & Governance Committees of the Board of Trustees;
- provide reports to the Board on a regular basis;
- identify areas of inefficiency, make recommendations for systems/process improvements, and assist other administrators in developing solutions;
- cultivate strong working relationships with administrators, faculty, and staff across the Academy; and
- ensure that the Advancement team is seen as a collaborative, responsive partner to all departments within the school.

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Deerfield Academy seek a Chief Advancement Officer with

- a commitment to the mission of Deerfield Academy—to prepare students for leadership in a rapidly changing world;

- experience building upon an existing advancement program and increasing philanthropic revenue for an institution;
- experience building an effective team through established goals and performance standards, and a commitment to the professional development and growth of staff members;
- success personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major individual gifts with significant institutional impact;
- an ability to inspire discerning, high-net-worth individuals to philanthropic leadership;
- an ability to analyze information and think strategically, critically, and creatively as well as an ability to translate new ideas into innovative programs;
- excellent written and communication skills;
- an ability to effectively delegate tasks and follow through on assignments;
- experience managing a campaign or major fundraising initiative;
- the professional credibility, intellectual depth, and maturity to garner the trust and confidence of the Head of School, senior leaders, faculty, trustees, students, and other key constituents;
- an ability to manage complex relationships, including significant experience working with board members and volunteers;
- the communication and interpersonal skills needed to work well with people at all levels of an organization, and across a diverse range of educational and social backgrounds;
- knowledge of best practices in development and alumni relations; and
- working knowledge of planned giving, donor advised funds, and financial and estate planning concepts.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least ten years of progressively responsible fundraising and management experience in advancement.

SALARY & BENEFITS

Deerfield Academy offers a competitive salary and a generous [benefits package](#).

LOCATION

Deerfield Academy is located in Deerfield, Massachusetts.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Deerfield Academy as well as the responsibilities and qualifications presented in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

To apply for this position, visit:

[*Chief Advancement Officer, Deerfield Academy.*](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Ron Schiller:

[*ronschiller@aspenleadershipgroup.com.*](mailto:ronschiller@aspenleadershipgroup.com)

All inquiries will be held in confidence.