



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

July 1, 2023

St. Francis Episcopal School
Houston, TX
stfrancishouston.org



The
Education
Group

MISSION

In the Anglican tradition, St. Francis Episcopal School challenges and motivates students in an academically and spiritually stimulating environment to become imaginative, critical thinkers and *people for others*.

CORNERSTONES

Faith, Dignity, Courage,
and Scholarship



Founded in 1952 as a parish school of St. Francis Episcopal Church, St. Francis Episcopal School (SFES) is an independent, college-preparatory school serving boys and girls from two years old through high school. SFES is located on 39 acres and two campuses (Piney Point and Couper) in the Piney Point Village/Memorial area of Houston, TX.

In its first year, SFES welcomed 24 preschoolers, and it gradually expanded into a PK-8 school and one of the largest Episcopal parish schools in the nation. SFES assumed its current PK-12 configuration by adding a high school on its Couper Campus in 2018, and it graduated its first Senior Class in May 2022. SFES currently enrolls 933 students from some 57 zip codes in the Houston area.

Faith, dignity, courage and scholarship are the four cornerstones of the St. Francis experience. During their time there, students discover and cultivate their particular talents and interests, developing the confidence, self-awareness, and enthusiasm to succeed in all endeavors.

As a community, SFES strives to grow intellectually and personally so that it may better serve the wider world. Because SFES believes an education is not for its community alone, the School designs every lesson, project, and experience to help its members all grow, as the Mission states, as “people for others”; thinkers, makers, and citizens who live their learning and their faith.



From Primary through Upper School, the St. Francis program sparks discovery, builds resilience, inspires faith, and deepens empathy. At every level, the carefully designed curriculum blends increased independence with collaboration and subject-matter mastery with curiosity-driven exploration. The St. Francis program uses the P.I.C. Approach: passion, imagination, and connection which come together to shape joyful, eager learners at every age.

Primary School (PK, ages 2-4)

The Reggio-Emilia inspired emergent curriculum in Primary School arises from student questions and interests. Teachers observe children's conversation and play, and from these observations spring projects that often span weeks or months. The collaboration with Rice University's School Literacy and Culture project positions teachers as "story takers" who carefully record students' thoughts, words, and ideas, which classmates then act out. This approach allows educators to hone in on specific literacy skills, including print concepts, word encoding, vocabulary, and punctuation, preparing students for the Reader's and Writer's Workshop methodology of Lower School.



Lower School (Grades K-4)

The Lower School offers an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based approach to learning which provides a rich, engaging learning environment that prepares students for the challenges of Middle and Upper School. Core curriculum includes Humanities, Math, STEAM, and Technology. Additionally, all classes attend Spanish, aer, physical education, spiritual education, and musical programs to enrich the Lower School experience. Classroom teachers are trained and practice the Responsive Classroom program which offers opportunities to develop self-management and relationship skills to increase academic, personal, and civic success. Students gain leadership experience by taking on ambassador roles, participating in service opportunities such as *People for Others Day* at community agencies, reading Scripture in chapel, and serving on the Leadership Council. Lower School students can also participate in a number of youth sports offered by the St. Francis Sports Association, a program offered by St. Francis Episcopal Church.

Middle School (Grades 5-8)

The St. Francis Middle School builds on the academic, social, physical and spiritual foundation laid in the Primary and Lower Schools. The Middle School program is designed developmentally to ensure that students grow into thoughtful, proactive, confident young teenagers, while still enjoying the wonders of childhood. Through challenging, innovative coursework, students master core subjects and use their knowledge to work on meaningful hands-on projects. The faculty and staff in the Middle School are engaged professionals who demonstrate their commitment to the students through their instruction, support of co-curricular programs, and open communication. The advisory program is structured around the Responsive Classroom approach to Social, Emotional, and Academic Learning (SEAL) which promotes experiences that help students begin to appreciate the diversity of background, thoughts, and perceptions of those around them. From art and drama to music and dance, students are offered many opportunities to develop their creative talents. PE classes emphasize physical fitness, and sixth through eighth graders are encouraged to participate on School athletic teams, with nearly a dozen sports available for boys and for girls.



Upper School (Grades 9-12)

In the Upper School, students combine intensive, interdisciplinary coursework with increasing autonomy to create a college-like experience, empowering them to hone their particular talents and interests while continuing to explore new possibilities - academic, personal, and spiritual. Through inquiry based learning, and innovative problem solving strategies, ninth and tenth graders shape their learning and leadership experiences in preparation for further study in grades eleven and twelve. By graduation, a St. Francis' education will foster an intense intellectual curiosity, a deep affinity for others, and a desire to gain an understanding beyond the student's own lived experience. The Upper School has an outstanding advisory program that supports students on a regular basis, and an exceptional fine arts program, with close to one hundred percent participation in musical and dramatic performances. As the Upper School grows, so does its athletic program. Around eighty percent of Upper Schoolers participate in athletics, with eight sports offered for both boys and girls. Upper School students have the opportunity to study and serve others the Houston community, across the country, and around the world - again underscoring the School's commitment to developing *people for others*.

As a parish school of St. Francis Episcopal Church, faith is foundational at SFES, and intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth intertwine and inspire one another in all that the School does.

As an Episcopal school, SFES welcomes families of all faith traditions. Traveling their individual St. Francis paths, students come to own their faith and know God through a personal relationship of worship, love, and service. Because this faith journey calls for open inquiry, respectful inclusion, and mutual effort toward the greater good, students and families of all faiths are welcome to join the SFES learning community. Diverse backgrounds and beliefs energize and strengthen the school community.

Students take a weekly religion class, and spiritual questions and themes are woven into the curriculum. Students and staff worship together at twice-weekly chapel services, and starting in Lower School, students celebrate Holy Eucharist monthly. The school community also gathers for special events, like the Blessing of the Animals and Episcopal School Sunday, and pastoral services are also offered to individual students and family members.

St. Francis Episcopal Church

SFES is a ministry of St. Francis Episcopal Church, one of the fastest growing parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. The Church property adjoins the school's Piney Point Village Campus, and students attend services held in the Church Sanctuary, regularly and on special occasions. A longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship exists between Church and School that continues under the leadership of its Rector, The Reverend Stuart Bates. The SFES Chaplain, The Reverend Robert Wismer, also serves as Assistant Rector of the Church, further illustrating the close and collaborative relationship between Church and School.





Teaching at St. Francis

Great teaching is at the heart of the St. Francis experience. This community of educators constructs a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence of learning objectives while protecting the natural social/emotional growth of their students. The faculty are degreed and highly qualified, and their teaching is marked by imaginative projects and high standards. Strong student/teacher relationships enhance teaching, learning, and bring joy to members of the school community. Lifelong learning by faculty and staff is encouraged and supported by the Sarah W. Woolrich Fund for Faculty which provides tuition reimbursement for graduate study, and professional study/development opportunities.

Parents and Alumni

St. Francis treasures the parents, grandparents, and alumni who share in celebrating and contributing to the success of its students. Parents are actively involved in many volunteer roles, and parents, past and present, join with alumni to provide financial support through annual giving to the St. Francis Fund and other opportunities to support school operations and strategic priorities. Every St. Francis parent is a member of the St Francis Parents Organization (SFPO). The SFPO supports the mission of St. Francis by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities across all four divisions (Primary – Upper School).

Board of Trustees

A 21-member Board of Trustees governs SFES. The Board is a self-perpetuating governing body whose members also include two representatives of St. Francis Episcopal Church, the Rector and a representative of the Church Vestry. While the Head of School is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, the Board focuses on three strategic areas critical to the success of any independent school: selection, evaluation, and support of the Head of School, to whom it delegates authority to manage the school; development of broad institutional policies; and accountability for the school's financial well-being, long-term sustainability and strategic direction. In addition to responsibility for daily operations, the Head of School serves at the pleasure of the Board, implements Board policy and advises and collaborates closely with the Board on both operational and strategic matters.

Campus

St. Francis Episcopal School, a ministry of St. Francis Episcopal Church, is located on two sites totaling 39 acres in the Memorial/Piney Point Village area of west Houston, a lovely upscale residential area. The School consists of a Piney Point Campus and a Couper Campus. Located next to the Church, the 16-acre Piney Point Campus currently houses programs for students in kindergarten through grade 8 and features regulation playing fields, a 600-seat Fine Arts Center, a certified Nature Explore outdoor classroom, a gymnasium and covered outdoor activities center, and a library. Less than two miles from Piney Point Campus, the 23-acre Couper Campus houses the Primary and Upper School divisions. The Primary division serves children aged 18 months to 5 years, in three cottages which provide an abundance of natural light and many details planned precisely for young learners and designed for their age and size. The Crum Athletics and Academic building will be complemented by the soon to be completed Student Life Building providing Upper School classrooms, student/school gathering places, the college counseling suite, and full service dining. A new turf field serves both campuses and MS/US sports.



Living in Houston

Houston has one of the youngest, fastest growing, and most diverse populations in the nation, and in the world. People from across the globe relocate to Houston every year to take advantage of the abundant opportunities the region provides. Though Houston is perhaps best known for its leading roles in space exploration and the energy sector, the nation's fourth-largest city has a strong presence in the biotech, healthcare, and aerospace industries as well. It is home to the world's largest medical center, to the renowned MD Anderson Cancer Center, and to nationally competitive universities including Rice University, the University of Houston, and Baylor College of Medicine, institutions that boast Nobel laureates and draw faculty and students from all over the world. The overall cost of living in Houston is slightly lower than the national average and dramatically lower compared to cities of comparable size and influence - New York, San Francisco, Washington D.C., Chicago, Boston, and Los Angeles. Currently home to the World Champion Houston Astros, Rockets and Texans, Houston's cultural, educational, medical, and employment opportunities are unparalleled, and it offers a perfect mix of Southern hospitality, urban sophistication and entrepreneurial spirit.

SCHOOL



Established: 1952

Grades: Pre-Primary - 12

Enrollment: 933

Primary School: 204 (class size 12-14)

Lower School: 346 (class size 16-18)

Middle School: 276 (class size 18)

Upper School: 107 (class size 15)

Students of color: 27%

Parish School: of St. Francis

Episcopal Church

Campuses: 2 with 39 acres in the

Memorial area of Houston

FACULTY



Total Faculty: 88

with Advanced Degrees: 40

Avg. years of experience: 14 (@ SF - 5 yrs.)

People of Color: 32%

Number of teachers with 10+ years experience: 44

Grants received: 38 faculty members for professional development

FINANCE



Tuition: \$16,200 Primary to \$29,400 Upper

Operating Budget: \$25m (2021-22)

Annual Fund: \$1.1m

Endowment: \$11.3m

Financial Aid: \$1.3m

Students receiving aid: 104 (11%)

Memberships and Accreditations



The Position

St. Francis Episcopal School (SFES) is seeking an educational leader who will build upon the legacy and advance the Mission of the school, working closely with the Board of Trustees to secure a lasting vision for the school's future. As its sole employee who serves at the pleasure of the St. Francis Episcopal Board, the Head of School will advise the Board of Trustees on school policy and implement Board policies and procedures, advise, recommend, and maintain fiscal policies and responsibilities, oversee all of the school's day-to-day operations including hiring and dismissal of all employees, and represent the school to the public.

SFES is characterized as a school with a nurturing, family-like school culture, a dedicated, highly skilled faculty and administration, exceptional academic and extracurricular programs with balanced opportunities for students, programming in leadership and character education, and a commitment to its identity as an Episcopal school. The next Head will be an experienced school leader who will be expected to uphold and promote these qualities.

Service to begin **July 1, 2023.**



The next Head of School will be an experienced school leader who will exhibit the following professional and personal qualities.

Professional Qualifications

The successful candidate will:

- Have Head of School or, at the very least, significant senior level independent school administrative experience;
- Possess strength in leading and mentoring faculty and administrative staff;
- Exhibit strong management skills;
- Possess strength and experience in curriculum design, program development and teaching;
- Preferably have experience at a faith-based school and be prepared to uphold and promote the Episcopal identity of the School;
- Be a proven relationship builder who can connect and inspire constituent groups;
- Exhibit business and financial acumen in a school setting, a desired trait; and
- Have some experience with multi-campus, multi-division schools and also with enrollment management.

Personal Qualities

St. Francis expects to attract a leader who:

- Is a person of faith and possesses the highest moral and ethical standards and integrity;
- Has very strong interpersonal and communication skills;
- Is at ease making fair, firm and consistent decisions;
- Has a warm and approachable personality and is highly visible in the school community;
- Has a passion for education and for working with children;
- Is a visionary and strategic leader;
- Has the ability to inspire and build trust; and
- Is thoughtful, measured and emotionally mature.

Opportunities and Challenges

The next Head of School should have the necessary skills and experience to address these opportunities and challenges at SFES.

The new Head of School will be expected to:

- Ensure that St. Francis remains, as the Mission states, a culture of *people for others*, with civility and respect for all and a strong sense of community;
- Maintain consistent excellence across all four divisions of the school and on both campuses, including continuing to strengthen the academic program PK-12;
- Promote the continuing growth of the high school, increasing student retention and achieving full enrollment, but not at the expense of the other divisions of the school;
- Engage, empower, support, retain and hold accountable faculty and administrative staff, creating a constructive, positive work environment;
- Ensure the financial health and stability of the school without diminishing the student experience;
- With the Mission and core values as an Episcopal school as a guide, skillfully, sensitively navigate and lead the school-wide conversation as well as seek consensus about DEI initiatives currently underway; and
- In light of the school's commitment to educating the whole child, continue building character and leadership skills and meeting students' social and emotional needs.

How to Apply

Prospective candidates should send the following materials in a single PDF document to the search consultants.

- Letter of interest specifically addressing this position and school
- Resume (education and work experience)
- Statement of school leadership philosophy
- List of five professional references with contact information
- Letters of reference, if available, but not required

St. Francis Episcopal School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or age in any of its policies or administration of those policies pertaining to hiring or employment practices. Nor does the school discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin with regard to admission procedures, scholarship, financial aid, or in any of the athletic or other school-administered curricular programs.



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