



Position Statement

Head of School

Episcopal School of Acadiana

Broussard, Louisiana

Start Date: July 1, 2026





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Overview

Episcopal School of Acadiana is the proverbial diamond in the rough. Its humble beginnings and rustic charm belie its fierce commitment to excellence.

Established in 1979 in the basement of the First Baptist Church in Lafayette, Louisiana, ESA is the premiere academic school in Acadiana. It is consistently ranked as one of the best independent schools in Louisiana. Boasting strong athletic and arts programs, the school excels in promoting the intellectual, physical, and artistic growth of its students. ESA weaves a strong sense of community with a welcoming school culture and steadfast commitment to fostering the moral growth of its students. The result is a school that helps students identify their talents and encourages them to share those talents with the world.

The school seeks a new head of school for July 2026, one who can build on the foundation of excellence and lead the school to even greater heights.

Episcopal School of Acadiana's mission is direct:

Episcopal School of Acadiana is a coeducational, independent day school for students in grades PK3 through 12. Our mission is to instill in every student the habits of scholarship and honor. ESA challenges students to develop intellectually, spiritually, and physically.

Episcopal School of Acadiana has three divisions located on two separate campuses. The school was an outgrowth of Ascension Day School, a parish PK-8 school in Lafayette. While Ascension's growth placed a stress on its facilities, a small group of Ascension families dreamed of an independent Episcopal high school to serve Acadiana. Ascension Episcopal Church and this dedicated group of families agreed that Episcopal School of Acadiana would take grades 6-8 from Ascension Day School and add a grade level each of the next four years. ESA graduated its first



class in 1983. In 1980, the Middle and Upper Schools (at the time, grades 6-10) moved to their present location in Broussard, just outside of Lafayette. In 2004, ESA established the Lower School with grades Pk3-5 in Lafayette. Today, the school has 501 students Pk3-12. The vast majority of fifth graders move on to the Middle School in Broussard.

The mission is expressed in a myriad of ways. At the Lower School, students not only develop the critical skills needed to further their continued learning, they also benefit from an engaging program that includes the Idea Lab in which students unleash their creativity by using design thinking skills in a collaborative environment. The Schoolwide Enrichment Model and the highly-regarded Learning Center allow this division to be responsive to students' individual needs. Middle School students learn from faculty who "get" this age group. At the Upper School, the 14 Advanced Placement courses and the enviable AP scores students achieve, reflect the school's dedication to scholarship.

At both campuses, weekly chapels foster spiritual growth and at the same time, strengthen the sense of community that is a hallmark of the ESA experience. In all divisions a spirit of kindness and compassion defines the culture. Episcopal School of Acadiana is a special community, rooted in strong values and a shared purpose.



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The Lower School Campus has beautiful facilities in the heart of Lafayette. Classrooms open up to a courtyard, and the Enrichment Center houses a variety of specialized spaces, including a science lab, music rooms, a makerspace, a library, and a chapel. The Middle and Upper Schools, known as the Cade campus, is set on a beautiful, oak tree-dotted property that invites students and teachers to use the outdoors for conversation, extra help, science studies, meetings, and more.

Episcopal School of Acadiana is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of 18 members. Some are ex-officio; hence, regular board meetings typically consist of 14 trustees, the Head, and any invited guests. Much of the work of the Board is accomplished through seven standing committees: Executive, Development, Assets (equivalent of a finance committee), Buildings and Grounds, Trustees, Diversity, and Legal. The Head of School and the Board Chair are members of each standing committee.

In accordance with good governance practices, the Board ensures that the mission of the school is being fulfilled, oversees its finances, leads fundraising efforts, and monitors the condition and safety of the plant and grounds. A Head Support and Evaluation Committee provides a safe space for the Head to share thoughts and concerns about the school and its operation. The highly successful capital campaign led by the Board of

Trustees and key members of the ESA community has already raised \$4.9 million on a \$6 million goal. As a result, construction of new classroom buildings on the Cade campus has already begun.

Since 2013, ESA has been ably led by Dr. Paul Baker. Dr. Baker has provided much needed stability and continuity for the school. Before becoming Head, Dr. Baker served as ESA's Head of Upper School. Dr. Baker is supported by seven senior administrators including division heads, directors of development and admissions, a business manager, an athletic director and a director of technology. Most of these experienced senior administrators have been at the school for a number of years. The senior leadership team meets weekly.

Episcopal School of Acadiana's commitment to excellence and the personal growth of its students is reflected in the success of many of its graduates. Alumni who have stayed in Lafayette continue to serve the school. Several are on the Board of Trustees. Many have moved on to successful careers in business, medicine, and law throughout the country. The impact that ESA has had on their lives is beautifully captured in "Beyond the Oaks" created by recent graduates presently attending college: <https://esacadiana.myschoolapp.com/page/esa-beyond-the-oaks>. The videos speak to the school's ability to prepare students for academic challenges on any stage anywhere in the country.



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Lafayette and Acadiana

Lafayette is the hub city of the eight-parish area known as Acadiana, home to roughly half of a million people. With a population of 121,500, the city of Lafayette includes the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, a public research university with the second largest collegiate enrollment in Louisiana, following Louisiana State University. Lafayette's thriving medical community is centered around two hospital systems, as well as many specialty hospitals, clinics, and offices. The technology industry is another growing field in Acadiana, with companies attracted and supported by The Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE), a center for technology-based business development at UL at Lafayette. Lafayette has been named the happiest city in the U.S. by the National Bureau of Economic Research because of the region's rich culture and quality of life. With hundreds of festivals each year, outdoor recreation, athletic teams, arts venues, an active local music scene, fantastic food, and friendly people, Acadiana provides a lifestyle that families love.



ESA At A Glance

Two Campuses: Pk3-5 (Lafayette, LA) & 6-12 (Cade, LA)
Religious Affiliation: Episcopal
Enrollment: 501
Student-Teacher Ratio: 5 to 1
Middle 50% ACT: 23-32
AP Scores 3 and Above: 97%
Five-Year AP Scholars: 247
Student Culture: Honor Code
Total Annual Budget: \$10 million
Percentage of Students Receiving Financial Assistance: 33%
Tuition Assistance: \$1.3 million
Number of Faculty and Staff: 121
Percentage of Faculty with Advanced Degrees: 43%
Number of Middle and Upper School Interscholastic Teams: 10 Athletic Teams/11 Academic Teams
Total Yearly Annual Fund: \$369,000
Parent Participation in Annual Fund: 60%
Total Giving to Current Capital Campaign: \$4.9 million
Endowment: \$1.5 million
Long-term Debt: \$4.9 million
Attrition: 7.2%
Accreditation: Independent Schools Association of the Southwest
Niche Rating: 4th Best Private High School in Louisiana
Athletic State Championships: 96
Programs of Distinction:
Lower School: National Elementary Honor Society
Middle School: National Junior Honor Society
Upper School: National Honor Society, Cum Laude Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Math Honor Society, Seal of Biliteracy
Motto: "Excellence from Within."
From the School Prayer: "Make us gentle, generous, kind, and brave."

For more details about Episcopal School of Acadiana and its programs, visit www.esacadiana.com



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The Position

For 46 years, ESA has been a beacon of educational excellence in Lafayette and the surrounding areas. Add to this reputation a welcoming community that cares deeply about each of its members and you have the essence of great independent school education. The school seeks an outstanding Head of School who can maintain the tradition of excellence and close community ties as a foundation for further substantive improvements. To this end, the Search Committee shares with candidates a list of key strengths of the school, opportunities for the next head to consider, and a set of key qualities it is looking for in the next leader. By no means exhaustive, the list below provides a starting point for candidates to better understand the school and its aspirations.

Episcopal School of Acadiana's Strengths

1. An unswerving commitment to academic excellence and engaging learning experiences.
2. A strong sense of community and a welcoming school culture.
3. An Honor Code that reflects the school's commitment to graduating students with a moral core and contributes to the culture of trust between students and faculty.
4. A culture that expects students to be independent and take initiative in shaping their educational experiences.
5. A faculty dedicated to the growth of the students and willing to "go the extra mile" to help them succeed.
6. Athletic and arts programs that combine participation with excellence to create dynamic and growth-producing student experiences.

Episcopal School of Acadiana's Challenges and Opportunities

1. Over the last five years, ESA's enrollment has declined, creating pressure on an already tight budget.
2. Although ESA is clearly viewed as the outstanding academic institution in Lafayette, the individual attention it provides its students and the financial pressures have led to an increase in the percentage of students with learning challenges. This, in turn, has led to questions about the school's identity in the market and its capacity to meet the needs of a diverse set of learners.
3. As is the case with many schools in the country, ESA is concerned about its capacity to attract and retain talent given some of the headwinds it is facing.
4. Although the Board of Trustees has led a successful fundraising effort to upgrade facilities on the Cade campus, more work needs to be done in this area.
5. Despite a successful capital campaign, ESA must continue to concentrate its efforts on philanthropy.
6. Communicating with clarity, and passion within the school community and throughout the larger Acadiana community about the "why" of ESA is critical to inspiring stakeholders and clarifying the school's value proposition.





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The Qualities of the Ideal Candidate

1. A practical visionary who can paint a compelling and realistic future of the school.
2. An educator who understands and embraces the key elements of a strong independent school education- excellence, relationships, and a strong sense of community.
3. A competitive entrepreneur who leads with courage and passion and inspires stakeholders to respond with extraordinary effort.
4. A proactive manager who can create clear systems, structures, and expectations to ensure ESA's stature as the premiere academic institution in Acadiana.
5. A leader ready to embrace a fundraising role to provide the fuel for change.
6. A moral leader who will uphold the Judeo-Christian values of the school and its Honor Code and continue its commitment to promoting a welcoming atmosphere.
7. A head who embraces the important role of being the "face of the school" and sees the development of relationships as critical to effective leadership.
8. A clear communicator who can confidently and succinctly explain the "DNA" of the school and use stories to demonstrate what makes it special.
9. A superb recruiter of talent.

Application Process

Episcopal School of Acadiana seeks a Head of School for July 2026. This is a unique opportunity for a skilled educator who believes passionately in the hallmarks of independent school education: a commitment to excellence, a strong sense of community, and a dedication to the growth of each student.

Candidates may submit an application on the RG175 website (<https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>) no later than **Monday, May 26, 2025**. Please note that an early submission is advisable to ensure a thorough review of your application. The application should include a cover letter of no more than one page, a resume, a statement of educational or leadership philosophy, and initially, two references with contact information. If your candidacy advances, you will need to submit three additional references. Applicants will be notified of their status in June 2025. Semifinalist interviews will be conducted July 18 and 19 and finalist visits will occur in late August and early September.

For more information, please contact:

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