



Head of School St. James Episcopal School Corpus Christi, Texas

Educating the whole child

Opportunity

St. James Episcopal School seeks a Head of School whose responsibilities will begin with the 2012-2013 school year. For over 65 years, the school has been a significant presence in elementary and middle school education in South Texas. In preparing young people to be persons of high character who strive to be servant leaders in the local, regional, and global communities, St. James focuses on the development of mind, body, and spirit, instilling in each child a genuine love of learning and respect for one another. Its programs are marked by an academically challenging environment, an overall spiritual formation curriculum, a robust outdoor education program, and a wide array of extracurricular activities.

Mission

The St. James mission is to develop each child to his or her fullest potential – spiritually, intellectually, and physically – that each child may grow in grace, enjoy freedom through knowledge, and lead a healthy, productive, and meaningful life. It is rooted in the community's strong belief in:

- A values-based educational environment within the Christian, Episcopal tradition which fosters intellectual, spiritual, and physical growth;
- The educational “intimacy” provided through small class sizes, attention to the individual, and appropriate parental involvement;
- A curriculum that rewards academic excellence within a challenging, inspiring program that also seeks to address individual learning differences;
- An experiential, integrated curriculum that values the arts, sports, and outdoor education as it expands the walls of the classroom;
- A structured class day and learning environment characterized by clearly defined behavioral standards;
- An environment which inspires students and staff to strive for personal excellence and to work at a level consistent with their personal potential;
- A safe community for students, parents, and friends based upon mutual respect and openness of thought.

The School: Overview

St. James Episcopal School currently serves 210 students from two-year olds in nursery school to eighth graders. They come from a wide array of socio-economic backgrounds. While predominantly Caucasian, the student body also includes Hispanics and African-Americans. Approximately 38% of the families are Episcopalians. Of the other 62%, more than half are Catholic and 36% are Methodists.

Faculty and staff, including part-time, number 41. Of the 40 who are full-time, 35% have advanced degrees. The current administration includes an assistant head and 3 divisional directors to assist the head of school.

The St. James campus which is shared with the Church of the Good Shepherd is located in downtown Corpus Christi, with a view of Corpus Christi Bay. The campus is designed in an open, Spanish style with tiled-roof buildings set among beautiful palm trees. Attractive courtyard areas have open, connecting walkways and a skyway bridges the Middle with Lower Schools. It is a campus which is charming, scenic, and functional.

History and Governance

In 1946, St. Margaret's Guild of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd began a preschool and named it the Good Shepherd Day School. Located in the Corpus Christi Civic Center, it operated under this name until losing its home in 1954. Fortunately, a group of parishioners from several Episcopal congregations who had been appointed by the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas recommended to the Bishop's Education Commission that an Episcopal day school should continue operating in Corpus Christi. The name St. James Episcopal School was chosen, and the school shortly began using classrooms in Foster Hall at the Church of the Good Shepherd, expanding from a preschool into primary grades.

Major facility expansion occurred in the 1980's with the addition of a gym, lower school campus, computer centers, and a library. Dobbins Hall, containing four preschool classrooms, was completed in 1994. In the mid-1990s, growth brought expansion into grades 5-8. In 2000, a 20,000 sq. ft. middle school building was added with an overhead skywalk that linked it with the lower school campus across the street.

Although St. James Episcopal School is separately incorporated, it is directly associated with the Church of the Good Shepherd and with the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas. The church and school share facilities, including Good Shepherd's exquisite sanctuary, and are jointly responsible for the use and cost of maintaining the spaces. Actual ownership of the property is vested in the Church of the Good Shepherd.

St. James Episcopal School is currently served by the Rev. Dr. Louis "Smokey" Oats, a veteran Episcopal Head of School who is serving ably as Interim for the 2011-12 school year. St. James School is governed by an 18-member Board of Trustees. Of the 18, eight trustees represent the Church of the Good Shepherd; three Vestry representatives and five communicants of Good Shepherd Church. The Rector, Interim Head of School and the president of the parents' organization serve as *ex-officio* members of the Board.

AT A GLANCE

An independent, Episcopal day school

Grades:	N-8
2011-12 Enrollment:	210
Faculty	41
Advanced degrees:	35%
Trustees:	18
Campus:	4 buildings
Endowment:	\$1.6 million
2011-2012 Budget:	\$2.4m
2011-2012 Tuition:	
N2 – N3:	\$3,850-\$6,050
K4-K5:	\$6,125-\$7,350
Lower School 1-4:	\$8,400-\$9,000
Middle School 5-8:	\$9,225-\$9,755

Accreditation/Memberships:

Southern Association of
Episcopal Schools (SAES)
National Association of
Independent Schools (NAIS)
National Association of Episcopal
Schools (NAES)

Other Quick Facts

Average class size:	11:1
Student to faculty ratio	8:1
Average experience, faculty/staff	16 yrs
Students receiving financial aid/merit scholarships	21%

www.sjes.org



Program Highlights

A strong commitment to the whole child is evident in all aspects of the St. James program. The depth of this commitment and its breadth within the school community are visible through:

Academic philosophy and program: As a school for students of average to above-average aptitude, the St. James curriculum is designed to challenge individual students. Grounded in tradition, it also remains flexible and adaptive to individual needs. The school recognizes that learning how to learn is as important as knowing what to learn. The school helps each student learn to communicate effectively while developing the ability to understand, to analyze, to question, and to think both creatively and critically.

Academic coursework at St. James is designed by the faculty with the school's mission and its educational philosophy in mind. Among its offerings in grades 1-8 is the *Central Theme* approach to Reading and Social Studies. An integrated, inter-disciplinary approach, it identifies developmentally appropriate literature that supports the Social Studies themes identified for each grade. Hands-on learning and activities which allow the students to live the time period which they are studying are hallmarks of the studies.

The Multisensory Teaching Approach (MTA)/Alphabetic Phonics and Life Skills are inclusions in the Lower and Middle School program. A supplemental reading/spelling program, MTA emphasizes small classes and a highly sequential, heavily drill-oriented approach to phonics instruction. Life Skills allows students to learn how to work together with their peers and deal with issues such as peer pressure, bullying, disrespectful behavior, and other matters that arise during day-to-day interactions.

Accelerated Instruction: Spanish instruction begins in Kindergarten and continues through each grade so that when a student graduates from St. James, he or she may enter high school with one or two high school credits. Similar advanced credits are also available in Algebra and Biology. Computers are part of the classroom curriculum beginning with the three- and four-year olds. As they progress, students learn to use Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel, and Word and are able to create artwork on the computer.

Outdoor Education program: In the popular Outdoor Education program, students discover and exhibit new skills outside the boundaries of the traditional classroom. Fourth graders take a one-day trip during the spring to San Antonio Museum of Art's Halsell Wing for Ancient Art. Fifth graders take a three-day trip to Mo-Ranch in the Texas Hill Country for science and nature outdoor education study and an introduction to leadership skills. Sixth graders cross Texas to the Big Bend Country, where they spend a week camping in Big Bend National Park, trail riding at Prude Ranch, hiking in the Chisos Mountains, and star gazing at the McDonald Observatory.



Camp Eagle near Hunt, Texas, is where 7th grade students concentrate on leadership skills, using the climbing wall as well as hiking, rock climbing, and canoe training activities. They also take various local Texas history trips, visiting the Missions in San Antonio and the Institute of Texan Culture, the State Capitol, and the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum in Austin. The 8th grade begins the school year with a three-day trip to Mo-Ranch for goal setting and team-building through participating in a variety of outdoor adventures. As a culmination of their travel experiences, the students take a six-day trip to Philadelphia and Washington.

Extensive Extra-curricular Programs: In comparison to other schools of similar size, St. James offers an impressive array and variety of co- and extra-curricular opportunities. While Art is part of the curriculum at all levels, after-school Studio Art is available, beginning with 4-year-old kindergarteners, to provide more in-depth instruction in art studies. Music, too, is offered to all students each week; additional opportunities include a Drum Ensemble and recorder lessons. Improv is taught as part of the 7th and 8th grade enrichment classes for three days a week for a trimester. Fifth through eighth graders can further pursue their interest at a Summer Improv Camp.

In addition to the curricular program of physical education, team and individual sports are offered to 4th through 8th graders; opportunities vary by grade level but include volleyball, basketball, track, golf, cross country running, soccer, and tennis. In addition, St. James has a climbing wall in the gym which is used for an after-school climbing club as well as physical education classes. Yoga for Middle School is also incorporated into PE time.

Other interest-based options for Middle School students include the Knowledge Masters - internet competition, Safety Patrol, Student Council, Spelling Bee, Drama and Art classes and climbing wall after-school opportunities. Pre and Lower School offer Tippi Toes dance classes and Yoga.

Extended Day: St. James' Wrap Around Program offers optional before/after school care for its students. The students are grouped by age for developmentally appropriate activities. Typically, the program includes games, indoor play, arts and crafts, snacks, time on the playground, and time for homework.



Episcopal Identity: SAES accreditation standard states: "The Episcopal identity of the school [is] expressed within the Episcopal traditions of faith and reason through worship, religious studies, and outreach activities in an environment defined by inclusiveness, encouragement, and respect." St. James' religious goals and objectives clearly take this standard seriously. Spiritual Formation classes and activities build upon one another as each child matures and moves to the next grade level.

All St. James students participate in daily devotions and age-appropriate twice-weekly chapel services. An advisory program has been instituted which includes an Educating the Heart program designed to connect the Bible to everyday life. In addition, the school emphasizes service to others, providing opportunities for all ages to participate in outreach projects. Clearly, Christian hospitality is reflected in the welcoming, warm sense of community that pervades the campus and is displayed in the ways members of the community treat one another – in the classroom, during sporting events, and on every field trip and outdoor education adventure.

Corpus Christi, Texas

Corpus Christi, located 140 miles southeast of San Antonio, has a population of 340,000 in the greater Nueces County area. Its diverse metropolitan community reflects a population which is 45% Caucasian, 37.6% Hispanic, 11.8% African American, and 3.8% Asian. The coastal city was founded in 1839 as a trading post during the war with Mexico. Today its economy includes the oil and gas refining industry, Army and Navy activities and facilities, and the Port of Corpus Christi.

The area is home to both beaches – and thus to the tourism industry– and actively managed farm and ranch land. The climate is mild with outdoor living a year-round benefit. City attractions include the Art Museum of South Texas, the aquarium, the historic U.S.S. Lexington Museum on the Bay, the famous King Ranch, the Corpus Christi Hooks minor league baseball team, the Museum of Science and History, and the Botanical Gardens. Recreational opportunities abound with water sports of all sorts as well as hunting and fishing. Two institutions of higher education are located in Corpus Christi: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi campus and Del Mar College. The area offers nine private elementary and middle schools, all smaller than St. James.

Priorities and Challenges

St. James has a notable history of educational excellence and leadership. As the school now faces downturns in the nation's economy with their resulting impact on the local community of Corpus Christi, it is clear that the school must continue to address issues of enrollment, academic excellence and affordability.

Enrollment: Families in the metropolitan area have many good options for education both from competing parochial and Christian schools and from the public offerings. Maintaining St. James Episcopal School in a top, competitive position requires full enrollment and quality teachers.

Academic Excellence: Recruiting, retaining and supporting excellent faculty are an important priority for the school. High standards and regular evaluations along with increasing faculty diversity are significant needs. However, it is not the faculty alone that defines academic excellence. The curriculum, instructional methods and resources, technology, and facilities are all essential elements that require clear-eyed assessment and improvement where needed.

Long-term Affordability: Along with all independent schools, St. James understands the challenge of balancing tuition increases with programs and the market's ability to support them. Affordability is a major challenge in increasing enrollment, diversifying the student body, and building endowment and scholarship programs.

Qualities and Qualifications for the Next Head of School

The following characteristics have been defined as those essential for the next Head of St. James Episcopal School:

- Strong academic preparation with a masters expected
- Demonstrated success as a leader in an academic setting
- Energy and integrity
- A commitment to uphold the school's Episcopal Identity
- The ability to think strategically about the future of St. James
- Acumen in finance and fundraising
- The talent to engage and inspire faculty and staff
- A wonderful role model for the school community
- An ability to make difficult decisions and to hold people accountable for their responsibilities and actions
- An understanding of the importance of communication at all levels, to all constituencies, for diverse purposes
- The skill to create a culture of transparency
- The ability to be articulate and persuasive in written and oral forms
- An innate ability to respect and connect with people of all backgrounds, and, of course, a love of students
- The ability to listen, to hear, and to engage all constituencies in community building
- A commitment to the School's Mission and Educational Philosophy with a deep understanding of the importance of the twin pillars of the St. James experience: academic excellence and spiritual and character development.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit electronically, by October 15, 2011, a cover letter, resume, statement of educational philosophy, and a list of five references with contact information to:

Mary E. Kesler, Search Consultant
mary@educationgroup.com
The Education Group
Office: 800-369-9102

Salary and benefits for this leadership position are commensurate with experience and background and are competitive with those of comparable institutions. Candidate files will be presented to the Search Committee in mid-October, 2011, and preliminary interviews will be conducted by the Search Committee following. Semi-finalists will be brought to the campus for more extended interviews in late October with finalists' interviews in November. The school anticipates that it will announce its Head of School appointment in December of 2011. Position responsibility will begin July 1, 2012.

St. James Episcopal School does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its hiring practices.

