
St. Stephen's Episcopal School

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Wimberley, TX 78676

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<http://www.ststeveschool.org>

HEAD OF SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Head of School Position

St. Stephen's Episcopal School, a parish day school in the Diocese of West Texas and located in the beautiful Texas Hill Country, seeks a Head of School to begin July 1, 2012. The Head of School is responsible to the Board of Trustees for upholding the school's mission and implementing policies and procedures determined in conjunction with the Board. The Head manages the daily operations of the school. The Head articulates the school's philosophy and objectives to all constituencies and actively promotes the school.

History and Overview of St. Stephen's Episcopal School



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church began in 1973 as a local parish under the sponsorship of St. Mark's in San Marcos and worship was held at the Wimberley Lions Club Field Office. Ground was broken for the current Chapel, a replica of San Francisco de la Espada in San Antonio, in 1975 and separate parish status was granted to St. Stephen's in 1981. Over the following years the parish added a Parish Hall and a Log Cabin to be used for Sunday School rooms. During a study of the goals of the parish, an interest in a school for young children emerged. Funding was found for a building, and the process began. In February of 1989, St. Stephen's Episcopal School became an active ministry of the parish with a separate 501c3 non-profit incorporation. The school opened its doors with fifty-six students PK2 through First Grade and eleven faculty and staff in September 1989. Importantly, the original gifts from the Burdine Johnson Foundation allowed the school to be established debt and want-free. The school was designed to incorporate daily outdoor learning, with playgrounds designed by international playground expert Dr. Joe Frost.

In 1998 the school was accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. As the school grew, multi-age and centers based settings were created for classes with the expectations of experiential learning and college preparation. By 1999, under the leadership of Headmaster Milam Jones, the school had grown to include PK2 through Sixth grade with 165 students. In 2000, the school was accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools and dropped its NAEYC affiliation. In that same year, a new gym was added and St. Stephen's Episcopal School graduated its first 8th grade class of eleven students. In 2002, the school enrollment peaked at 220 students. New classrooms, covered walkways, a library, and a computer lab were all added to the campus during this time. The school technology initiative

began in 2004, which resulted in an all-campus digital network, new student laptops and desktops for all teachers, and new computers in the lab. Over the past 6 years the school has also fortified its commitment to experiential learning with a revised PK2-3 playground, a new aviary, new gardens, and a field-school component that includes water quality monitoring and archaeology. Daily chapel, a school honor code, and a three-season after school program was initiated in 2004. From 2007-2010, the school revised its teacher development and evaluation program, created a standardized academic exit and entrance expectation document, revised its admissions process and re-tooled its core academic program with new math, language arts, and science curriculum.

In an effort to consolidate resources and focus on strengths, the school was reduced to PK-5th Grade in the fall of 2010. Over the years, the school has been funded predominantly by one family foundation that has not only financed school initiatives but also covered some operating costs and debt service. Though the school is currently small, it is also strong and mission-driven with a committed Board of Trustees, an outstanding faculty and staff, and dedicated families. Through the combined vision and determination of the church and school community, St. Stephen's seeks to provide an exceptional education for children from Wimberley, Driftwood, Austin, and surrounding communities.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School Purpose & Values Statements

Mission

The Mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal School is to develop each student to his/ her full potential academically, spiritually, morally, and physically. Through educational experiences in a Christian community, each student will grow in grace and become a responsible and ethical leader.

School Creed

I believe in God above, I believe in Jesus' love. I believe His Spirit too, comes to teach me what to do. I believe that I should be kind and loving, Lord, like thee.

Core Values

A. Spirituality

We are an Episcopal school that focuses on an ongoing relationship with God. We provide daily worship and the opportunity to develop Christian values. We promote respect for all faiths.

B. Community

We are dedicated to transforming the lives of our students, families, faculty and staff. We provide an educational community that is safe, nurturing, and joyful. We foster an innovative and creative experience committed to educating the whole child, where each child is known and allowed to pursue self-discovery.

C. Character

We believe we are all created in God's image and likeness. We promote the moral values of respect for self and others, responsibility, integrity, tolerance and compassion. We believe that contentment, a good sense of humor, recognition of self-worth and physical well-being reflect a healthy, developing child.

D. Balance

We provide a structured environment of challenging academic, artistic, athletic and extracurricular programs and partner with families in the development of their children with an emphasis on individual learning.

E. Stewardship

We teach our students the value of utilizing their gifts and talents for the greater good and benefit of others. We encourage students to do their best each day for personal growth, and to give back to the school, the larger community, and the environment through hands-on experiences and applied knowledge.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School Episcopal Identity



St. Stephen's Episcopal School works to be a flagship of Episcopal School identity and maintains accreditation by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES; www.swaes.org). Membership in the National Association for Episcopal Schools (NAES; www.naes.org) further solidifies our traditional excellence, which values faith and reason as a way to true understanding. The Episcopal Schools Commission of the Diocese of West Texas (www.episcopal-dwtx.org) also provides structure and standards for an excellent school experience. These regional organizations support schools with training, standards, and policies. They also provide SSES with a sense of purpose greater than our regional influence and allow us to assist in the creation, maintenance, and expansion of a dynamic network of Episcopal schools with a deep sense of shared mission and identity.

St. Stephen's Episcopal School in Wimberley was created as and remains the largest and most diverse ministry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. As the primary outreach ministry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, the school holds daily chapel services, as a way to honor its Episcopal identity and school founders. The school sees chapel as a classroom experience in which students are at the center of the experience and are guided by outstanding, well-trained teachers who rotate as celebrant. Children are taught spiritual formation through lessons in *Godly Play* PK-3rd grade and as a part of the Social Studies curriculum 4th and 5th Grade. In the tradition of Episcopal Schools, the school is unapologetically Episcopal through teaching and modeling Anglican rituals, open-mindedness, tolerance, peaceful resolution, appreciation of spiritual difference, and understanding of the world community.

Overview of St. Stephen's Episcopal School Programs



Academic/Extra-Curricular Programs

With a twenty-year tradition of extraordinary educational experiences, St. Stephen's Episcopal School is proud to provide excellent instruction of core academics: History, Language Arts, Literature, Math, Physical Education, and Science supported by off-campus educational experiences. Beginning in Pre-K, the school's approach is to make learning individualized, integrated, and applied. Daily chapel, a Biblical literacy program, daily physical education, and instruction in Spanish, music, and art complement the school's commitment to educating the whole child: Body, Mind and Spirit.

Extra-curricular activities are open to all area students and have grown to include archery, art, balance, dance, drama, kids in the kitchen, music, physical fitness, and "woodsies" an outdoor primitive survival program. These programs illustrate the school's commitment to experiential learning and teamwork.

Educational Philosophy

Based on a strong Christian ethic, the curriculum of St. Stephen's Episcopal School is designed to reflect the philosophy of the school by setting goals which, when attained by the students, will help them to establish a strong intellectual, physical, moral and ethical foundation for their lives.

The curriculum is based on a belief that early childhood development through concrete hands-on experiences provides a solid foundation for educational growth. Small classes and excellent instruction allow for optimum individual development. Further enrichment is provided by special instruction in *Kodaly* music, motor skills development, world cultures exposure, Spanish language studies, and digital media in the computer lab and mobile laptop lab. Classrooms and play areas are designed and furnished to enhance self-initiated learning experiences. Students benefit from Math, Science, History, Computers, Music, Art, Spanish, PE and Language Arts. There are a variety of extracurricular activities in which the students may participate

The priorities of St. Stephen's Episcopal School are to

- Develop Christian spirituality and Biblical literacy through prayer and worship, study of scripture and religious education within the Episcopal tradition. The school values an atmosphere of open inquiry and respect for the great diversity of religious affiliations of its families.

- Provide a well-rounded, integrated curriculum that emphasizes strong academics and respect for the individual student. In addition to rigorous preparation in core competencies (e.g., language arts, science and mathematics), the program emphasizes
 - Social skills and awareness, including good manners, awareness of cultural diversity, the ability to cooperate and compromise and ethical leadership skills.
 - Appreciation of the fine arts, including musical literacy and competency, knowledge, and experience in the visual and performing arts, and appreciation of good literature.
 - Physical fitness, good sportsmanship and the ability to be a good team member, both on and off the field.
 - Development of moral character, personal responsibility, self-discipline, mutual respect, personal integrity and commitment to service.
- Provide an inspiring model of Christian community that is governed by the principles of an Honor Code. The school creates a safe and caring environment, and it reaches out to serve the larger community.
- Nurture strong family-school partnerships. Families support the school and model values of servant leadership through extensive voluntarism in the school and community.

Mind, Body, and Spirit: Learning at St. Stephen's Episcopal School

St. Stephen's Episcopal School offers each child extraordinary educational opportunities at the preschool, primary, and intermediate, grade levels. The core subjects are designed to promote the mastery of essential skills and concepts. They also provide opportunities for each student to be challenged with new information and experiences. The individual needs of students at St. Stephen's Episcopal School are met in a variety of ways.

- **Differentiation:** Differentiated instruction links content, process and product. The students acquire this not only from the teacher and texts, but also through a variety of materials and methods including flexible grouping. Teachers provide a learning environment that responds to learners' needs through differentiation. Using daily informal observation and additional formal assessment, the teacher notes progress and plans instruction accordingly for each child.
- **Integration:** In an effort to engage all learners and make teaching and learning more meaningful and connected to real life, teachers provide active and in-depth learning through curriculum integration. This methodology is used in the language arts by integrating reading and writing/composition, grammar, and pre-reading phonics with spelling. History and literature are integrated. Teachers organize learning through themes that can cover the entire year or be as short as one week. This helps students relate all the information from several content areas-

Students, Faculty, and Staff



The Head of School oversees the day-to-day operation of the school, organizes the curriculum, and works with teachers and a faculty and staff of seventeen to ensure that students receive the best educational experience possible, while working diligently to ensure the long term sustainability of the school and its vision. The Head of School is the face of the school, to the St. Stephen's school, church and local communities.

Class Size

St. Stephen's Episcopal School provides small classes, recognizing the need for more teacher time with individual students but also honoring the students' needs for meaningful instruction. The school maintains adherence to the NAES criteria on class sizes, which are:

<u>Age/Grade</u>	<u>Max. Number of Students</u>	<u>Teacher/Student Ratio</u>
3 yr.	18	1:12
4 yr.	18	1:14
K-5th	20	1:16

Current Enrollment = 63

<u>Age/Grade</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
PK3	10
PK4	12
K/1	16
2/3	17
4/5	8

Accreditation/Affiliation/Licensing

St. Stephen's Episcopal School is accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools, which is recognized by the Texas Private School Accreditation Committee and by the National Association of Independent Schools Commission on Accreditation and St. Stephen's is also a member of National Association of Episcopal Schools.

Strengths and Accomplishments of the School

- Loving child-centered community where teachers advocate for students
- Spiritually-centered school that promotes individual growth, experiential learning, and compassionate problem solving

- Inclusive culture that promotes challenge, accountability, and respect
- Beautiful and peaceful campus
- Enrichment provided through daily instruction of music, art and physical activities
- Environment which is nurturing, positive and stimulating, fostered by the interaction of faculty, staff, parents, and students
- Learning environment reflecting the school's philosophy to educate students intellectually, physically and spiritually
- Programs that qualify students for competition at the national level
- Art program that produces original works shown at the National Art Convention
- Academic programs whose graduates have excelled in their endeavors following their St. Stephen's experience.

Challenges and Opportunities for the next Head of School

- Leading the school into an awareness of and planning for a school of the future
- Widening the applicant pool, growing enrollment, and strengthening retention
- Promoting and marketing the unique features of the school
- Planning for the long-term financial sustainability of the school
- Setting a vision and the strategic priorities of the school for the coming years
- Identifying and maximizing non-tuition revenue sources
- Tracking and promoting the academic achievement of former students.

Characteristics and Skills Sought In the Next Head of School

In addition to being intellectually curious, warm, caring, approachable, confident, decisive, energetic, enthusiastic, flexible, patient and supportive, the ideal candidate must

- Be the school's foremost advocate
- Be a leader who leads by example
- Be a visionary leader ready to grow the school and support its mission
- Have insights about current educational "best practices" and future needs for teaching and learning
- Have familiarity with faculty professional development, technology, research, and testing
- Have a solid track record in sound fiscal operations, financial sustainability, and school advancement/fundraising
- Have exceptional leadership, management, organizational, and decision-making skills
- Be proactive in marketing and recruiting
- Have superior interpersonal skills
- Have superior communication skills (listening, speaking, writing)
- Be committed to spiritual growth

Background and Education Experiences Sought in the Next Head of School

Candidates for the position should have significant early childhood and/or elementary expertise. At least a Master's degree, and a minimum of five years of teaching and administrative experience in private schools are preferred. The applicant must be a person of faith with Episcopal affiliation preferred but not required, and he/she must be comfortable expressing strong Christian beliefs.

Application Process

A complete applicant's file includes:

- Cover letter expressing interest in the St. Stephen's Episcopal School Head of School position
- Current resume or curriculum vitae
- Statement of educational philosophy (one or two page(s) only)
- Name, title, email address, and phone numbers of six references (three personal and three professional)

All applications (email preferred) should be sent to SAES Search Consultant:

Sue Kirkpatrick
6510 St. Stephen's Drive
Austin, TX 78746
skirkpatrick@swaes.org

Application Deadline: January 15, 2012

Further questions should be directed to any of the following people:

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