



St. John's

EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

OUR VISION

At St. John's Episcopal School, our mission is to inspire and nurture each child's unique potential in a caring, Christ-centered environment. We are dedicated to fostering a love of learning through a challenging and engaging curriculum, enriched by the arts, sciences, Spanish and physical education. St. John's teachers partner with families to cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and character, empowering students to become their best. Together, we strive to create a community where every child feels valued, inspired, and prepared for a lifetime of success.

AT A GLANCE

Enrollment: 183

Preschool (2 years old- PreK 4): 114

Elementary (Kinder - 5th grade): 70

Faculty and Staff: 58

Average Class Size: 12

Student-to-Teacher Ratio: 9:1

Tuition:

Preschool (2 years old- PreK 4): \$6,000 (PT), \$7,800 (FT)

Elementary (Kinder- 5th grade): \$9,550

STJOHNSABILENE.ORG

1600 SHERMAN DRIVE / ABILENE, TEXAS 79605

325.695.8870



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services



WHO WE ARE



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL in Abilene, Texas, has proudly served the community for over 70 years. St. John's was founded in 1952 as a mission of the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest and began with a single Kindergarten class. Since then, it has grown into a thriving institution with nearly 200 students. St. John's has remained committed to providing a rich, well-rounded education that helps boost every student's intellectual, physical, and spiritual health.

St. John's is proud of its tradition of **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**, with many alumni having earned distinctions such as valedictorian, salutatorian, and National Merit finalists. The school's rigorous academic program has also produced gifted scholars, musicians, and athletes, who become leaders in the community. The dedicated faculty and staff play an integral role in nurturing these achievements, providing guidance and support that empowers students to challenge themselves, build resilience, and develop independent thinking skills. In addition to core academics, St. John's provides enrichment programs in Music, Technology, Art, Spanish, P.E., STEM, Library, and Godly Play. This diverse curriculum ensures that students receive a comprehensive education that prepares them for future academic success while fostering creativity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning.

A key aspect of life at St. John's is its strong **CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION**. Worship is central to the school's community, with weekly chapel services led by clergy from Heavenly Rest. Students also have the opportunity to serve as worship leaders, taking on roles as officiants, readers, and acolytes. These services provide a spiritual framework that encourages students to live by Episcopal principles of **COMPASSION, SERVICE, and INTEGRITY**. The school's commitment to Christian education guides students to develop a sense of purpose and responsibility as they learn to contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELLNESS are also an important part of St. John's holistic approach to education. The school's campus includes a spacious air-conditioned gym, four well-designed playgrounds, a track for physical fitness, and a learning garden. These facilities support a wide range of activities aimed at promoting physical development and encouraging students to enjoy exercise and outdoor play.

Beyond academics and physical education, St. John's places a strong emphasis on building a vibrant, **SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY**. The school hosts a variety of events throughout the year, including the Halloween Carnival, Leprechaun Laps, the Blessing of the Animals, and St. John's Sunday, which provide opportunities for students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni to come together in celebration. Regular celebrations of birthdays and other milestones further foster a sense of belonging and connection, creating a warm and inclusive environment where all are valued.



St. John's

EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

OPENINGS & OBSTACLES

In October of 2024, members of the St. John's community, including current families, former parents, faculty and staff, donors, and members of Heavenly Rest, participated in a survey soliciting their impressions of the school. Respondents to the survey identified a number of strengths, as well as some opportunities for growth.



STRENGTHS

Among the aspects of life at St. John's that were most valued by survey respondents was the opportunity for students to experience religious formation. Many parents indicated that one of the primary reasons they sent their children to St. John's was because of the Christian environment. Participants in the survey were also very complimentary about the quality of the faculty and administrative staff, as well as the strength of the academic program. Many expressed appreciation for the small class sizes at St. John's. The survey also indicated an appreciation for the enrichments offered by the school, as well as an acknowledgment of the way that St. John's prepares students for leadership.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Despite the strength of our academic programs, the survey indicated some concern about teacher turnover. There were also responses about the need to develop strategies for increasing enrollment, particularly in the upper elementary grades. Several respondents reported that "it's hard to be new at St. John's," which outlines the need for more intentional communication about the school's culture to new staff and families. There was also a strong desire to develop a more fulsome approach to fundraising and institutional advancement, in order to help secure the long-term financial sustainability of the school. While many expressed appreciation for the Christian environment at St. John's, some were eager to see a greater emphasis on the school's Episcopal identity. There was significant enthusiasm for hiring a new Head of School, in part of the way that person might be able to address some of these challenges.

LOOKING AHEAD

After a period of significant discernment, the St. John's Board of Trustees voted to begin enrolling students for 6th Grade in the 2025-26 school year. This decision was made in response to considerable interest among members of the St. John's community, as well as an appraisal of the educational climate in the Abilene area. The plan is to consider the addition of 7th and 8th grades in subsequent school years.

St. John's has been well-served by its physical plant since the 1980s, but the facility is beginning to show its age. While several renovations have taken place over the years, there is a need to develop a broader plan for renewal and expansion. The opening of our Smart Lab has demonstrated that technology is becoming an integral part of the classroom experience. Our facilities need to be improved in order to accommodate advancements in technology. With a 32-acre fenced-in campus, there is space for both new building projects and any temporary facilities that might be necessary during construction.

As St. John's enters the next season of its life, it would benefit from intentional outreach to the community. Specific examples include the cultivation of the alumni network, the development of marketing strategies for the Abilene community, and the strengthening of the relationship between Heavenly Rest and the school.

CONCLUSION

The future is bright at St. John's. After more than 70 years of serving the Abilene community, we are poised to educate and form a new generation of leaders. With gratitude for the visionary leadership of our forebears, and with trust in God's grace, we are eager to begin the next season of our life together.

TO APPLY

Application includes:

Letter of interest (cover letter)

Resume

Educational Philosophy

Four current references and contact information

(These references will not be contacted until the finalist stage of the process)

THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF THE FULL APPLICATION IS MONDAY, JANUARY 13TH, 2025.

To submit your application or if you have any questions, please email Sharra Longhofer at slonghofer@yahoo.com.

HEAD OF SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

We seek a Head of School who can carry on the tradition of excellence at St. John's and someone who will embrace innovation and lead St. John's into the future. We seek a leader who is confident in his/her abilities, and willing to ask for help when needed. The ideal candidate will possess the following qualities and skills and will be able to take on the responsibilities listed below.

PERSONAL TRAITS

- Mature Christian faith and demonstrate a sense of calling as a servant leader
- A leader whose vision leads to establishing ambitious goals, creating a passion for and inspiring involvement with the school, and articulating the institution's objectives
- Reflects strong moral character, commitment to academic excellence, and respect for others

SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

- Expertise in education and instruction
- Experience with fiscal management, institutional advancement, admissions, and establishing school policies
- Strong public speaking and writing skills to communicate concepts and ideas effectively
- The business and management skills to develop strategic plans, improve administrative infrastructures, and prepare school budgets and schedules
- Experience in independent, Episcopal, or faith-based school
- Knowledge of and appreciation for of Episcopal identity

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Uphold the school's mission of providing a Christian, student-centered, academically challenging, and nurturing educational experience
- Work closely with trustees and other key constituents on the school's strategic direction, campus improvement plans, and institutional advancements
- Manage the school on a day-to-day basis by empowering faculty and staff through delegation of responsibilities and authority while retaining ultimate accountability
- Recruit, develop, and retain an outstanding staff and faculty who are committed to professional development and lifelong learning
- Maintain the short and long-term fiscal health of the school in collaboration with the Finance Committee and chief financial officer
- Engage with the community to honor the school's emphasis on communicating with parents, teachers, and students with transparency