



SAINT MICHAEL EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

DALLAS, TEXAS
HEAD OF SCHOOL
START DATE: JULY 1, 2020
WWW.SMESDALLAS.ORG



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES



Mission

To provide a nurturing, individualized, inclusive preschool and kindergarten experience that is based on our four pillars – love, faith, education, and service.

This mission statement serves as the basis for all decisions made by the Board of Directors, faculty, and staff as they work with the students and as they organize and govern the school. If an action, policy, or decision does not support this mission statement, it is not the best decision for the school.

Fast Facts

- Located in North Dallas
- 211 students – projected 232 for 2019-2020
- Grade levels: 12-month-old students, two's, pre-school, and kindergarten
- 35 faculty and staff members, 26 who are classroom teachers
- 37% of the student families are church members
- 7:1 average student-teacher ratio
- Annual budget: \$2,000,000
- Fully accredited by the [Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools](#) (SAES)

OVERVIEW

There is something special and lasting about the experience of Saint Michael Episcopal School. According to its families, this special something is more than the high quality of its Pre-School and Kindergarten programs and stems from the school's pervasive sense of community and connection to each family it serves. The faculty, staff, and administration take great pride in creating an environment that supports each student in a one-of-a-kind early childhood journey. At Saint Michael Episcopal School, every student is known, and every student is personally greeted at school each morning and given a positive send off at the end of their busy and productive school day.

Amy McMahan is the current Head of School at Saint Michael and will serve in this role through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Amy agreed to step into the Head of School role starting in 2018-2019 after the completion of the former Head's six-year tenure. Amy is a former educator at the school, a former parent, and will not be a candidate for the long-term position. Saint Michael now seeks a new leader who reflects the loving approach to early childhood pedagogy and, is prepared to join and enhance the school's unique sense of community that serves not only the child, but the whole family.

The new Head will enter a school in excellent condition, as well as a school on the cusp of exciting new opportunities. Saint Michael currently shares a facility with the Episcopal School of Dallas Lower School, but at the end of the 2020 school year the ESD Lower School will be moving to its main campus a few miles away. This will free up a large amount of additional educational space for use by Saint Michael School educational programming.

Saint Michael enjoys financial support and use of church facilities from Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church. There is a very positive and supportive relationship with the Church. The school created its own Board of Directors for the first time in 2017 to enhance the governance of the school.

Core Values

- We seek to love, nurture, and educate each child in every class.
- We strive to make each child feel secure and encouraged to learn.
- We provide teacher-student relationships that are both loving and mutually respectful.
- We support our students and their families to prepare them for the future.
- We are teaching our students to serve others through hands-on service opportunities.
- We teach them about the love of God.
- We include the Episcopal Identity and Values in our daily school life activities.



The incoming Head will join a school community that is ready to continue innovating, improving, and differentiating itself as the leading Pre-School/Kindergarten choice in Dallas. The constituents of the community are excited to begin the search for a new leader. The successful candidate will be warmly and joyfully welcomed into this strong and supportive culture.

THE SCHOOL

For more than 30 years, Saint Michael Episcopal School has provided high-quality, specialized education to the North Dallas community. Established as a ministry of Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in 1986, the school began as a Mother's Day Out program. It has since evolved into a thriving preschool that offers educational opportunities for children 18 months through Kindergarten. The classrooms are vibrant and filled with excitement. The intentional and well-designed curriculum includes an integrated social-emotional learning component.

The school is a caring, diverse community, inclusive of all faiths, while firmly grounded in the Episcopal tradition, nurturing moral growth and valuing the potential and dignity of every human being. Saint Michael's educational program has long been centered on a play-based, character-enriching early childhood experience. The program's creative activities develop the whole child by providing building blocks that prepare for future academic success, stimulating physical activities, and rich opportunities to be creative. As an additional service, when needed, the families have professionals who are available to provide services such as speech and occupational therapy. These services are provided at the school and during the school day.



The school also has a full program of extended day services that include early arrival, extended days, a full array of enrichment programs, and a summer program available for families who need these additional services. Enrichment programs include Spanish, drama, sports, yoga, and LEGO building.

The school recently completed an extensive accreditation visit by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools. This is the school's first attempt at accreditation and was awarded full accreditation with no provisions on their first attempt.

THE FUTURE

Throughout the remarkable 32-year history, the school has experienced tremendous growth. It intends to continue on this path with the goal of becoming the premier independent accredited Episcopal preschool and kindergarten in Texas. The robust enrollment paired with the upcoming availability of the classrooms previously utilized by the Episcopal School of Dallas Lower School positions the school to embark on a new phase of growth. The exciting opportunities afforded by this newly available space will allow the potential to grow the pre-school by about 50 %. The new Head of School will be an integral part of the development of these plans and will serve as an educational visionary for upgrading and reconfiguring the facilities of the Saint Michael Episcopal School campus.



CURRICULUM

The school structures the day, its classrooms, and its outdoor playgrounds to provide spaces for exploration and discovery. Children work on learning self-regulation and social skills as part of a well-rounded curriculum.

Teachers guide the children's exploration by providing materials and settings that inspire their curiosity. Learning is based on the age of the child and the developmental readiness of the children in that particular developmental year.

The curriculum grows as the children grow. Current education programs and the curriculum are based on researched programs that proved the best possible preparation for the student's developmental needs. Phonics and Literacy blends concepts from leading literacy authors to differentiate pre-reading instruction. Exposure to the essential phonics skills lays the groundwork for life-long readers. Math utilizes the real-world problem-solving program, *Everyday Math*. The handwriting program stresses developmentally appropriate coloring, drawing, and handwriting readiness using the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum. The unique writer's workshop engages children to tell and create stories utilizing the *Talking/Drawing/Writing* program. Science comes alive in the curiosity stimulating and hands on *Science Explorers* program. *Kimochis* stresses social-emotional learning that coaches children to recognize and manage their emotions, make responsible decisions, and handle challenges.



EPISCOPAL IDENTITY

If play-based, hands-on, well-planned developmentally appropriate curriculum delivers the foundation of Saint Michael's educational program, the school's Episcopal identity is its heart. The Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church serves approximately 7,000 members, from throughout the Greater Dallas area. Many Saint Michael families attend both the church and the school, offering an uncommonly rich opportunity for partnership among the whole community. Faculty and church staff encourage and nurture the spiritual and character development of each student through weekly chapel, and the parish's clergy are active in the school's worship and common life.

DALLAS, TEXAS

Dallas is the second largest city in the state of Texas. A vibrant cultural and economic center, Dallas was one of the faster-growing large cities in the nation over the past decade and is home to a number of Fortune 500 companies' headquarters or regional offices. The city has a number of prestigious universities and highly regarded museums. The cultural, educational and sports-related activities of these institutions provide a great addition to the quality of life in Dallas.

The city's mild climate makes it a haven for outdoor activists including bikers, runners, and swimmers. A lively, bustling city with many economic, cultural, and recreational activities, Dallas is a wonderful place to live and raise a family. The city has a wide array of educational opportunities to offer families in all stages of life. Saint Michael students matriculate at a rate of approximately 50% to excellent public schools and 50% to diverse and excellent private schools in the area.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Saint Michael offers a passionate early childhood educator an outstanding opportunity to join and grow along with an exceptional school. The faculty is a strong group of dedicated educators who will welcome their next leader and expect to continue the school's trajectory of annual improvement in every phase of its operation. The school has an excellent working relationship with the church.

Ironically, the challenge a new Head of School will face is at opposite ends of the admissions process. Admission to the younger student classes is highly competitive and will be a potential area for growth as the new facilities become available. Qualified families who are eager to be a part of the Saint Michael school community are sometimes not admitted due to full enrollment. Kindergarten enrollment has not been as strong, as some leave for their next school before completing their time at Saint Michael. This has been motivated by a perceived situation in which some parents fear that not leaving early for Pre-K or Kindergarten programs may cause them to miss being admitted to their preferred next school. Even with this challenge, the school continues to have steady increases in enrollment.

Other challenges will also emerge from Saint Michael's strengths, as the highly effective and efficiently run program will task a new leader with quickly building relationships and trust that will allow the faculty, students, and school community to continue flourishing and improving.



QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES OF THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Board of Trustees and the greater Saint Michael's community are interested in candidates who are educational visionaries, are passionate about working with pre-school children, and who delight in fostering a community in which being known and cared for as individuals are highly valued. There is a preference for candidates with proven leadership, communication, outstanding judgment, and interpersonal skills to help the school maintain its commitment to its mission and reputation as the premier pre-school experience available in Dallas. The school is most interested in candidates who demonstrate most, if not all, of the following:

- A passion for educational and organizational excellence and demonstrated experience in providing the leadership necessary to help a school achieve and sustain excellence.
- Effective communications skills and relationship building with faculty members, parents, students, community members, the Board of Directors, and the parish.
- The ability to express a strong appreciation for teachers and staff and build an effective and enjoyable team.
- A warm, approachable presence that invites and respects the views of others, but always does what is best for children and the school as a whole.
- A leadership approach that empowers and equips everyone in the school community to become their very best by effectively tapping into the commitment, energy, and wisdom present in the faculty, staff, board, and the larger Saint Michael community.
- An understanding of and commitment to strategic external affairs, including fundraising, marketing, and broader community involvement. The successful candidate will be comfortable asking for financial support and have a commitment to encouraging a culture of philanthropy.
- A proven administrative background with ability to hold everyone accountable to be their very



best for the children and the school as a whole, serving first as a model of self-awareness and discipline.

- An astute sense of how to maintain and implement a financially sustainable approach to the business side of the school.
- A candidate is not required to be an Episcopalian; however, they must dedicate him/herself to gaining a deep understanding of the school's Episcopal identity and the big part that identity plays in the life of the school.
- Being an active member of a church and dedicated to living their faith through their work.
- The Head of School must enjoy being an active and visible presence on campus, in chapel, and as the primary spokesperson and ambassador for the school in the larger community.

The favored candidate will be someone with a sharp and perceptive intellect and a warm, empathetic presence; someone who relishes knowing and being known by the full community. The person will also be outgoing, energetic, and confident with strong emotional intelligence, fine personal values, and excellent communication skills. A down-to-earth, accessible style, a sense of humor and a willingness to listen while drawing wisdom from the views of faculty, students, parents, and others will be valued.



To APPLY

To apply for Head of School at Saint Michael Episcopal School, candidates should submit the following materials electronically (preferably as separate PDFs) to Bob Windham of Carney, Sandoe & Associates:

- A cover letter explaining the reasons for their interest in and qualifications for becoming the next Head of School at Saint Michael Episcopal School;
- A current résumé;
- A personal educational statement;
- The names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. (Specific references will be contacted only with the candidate's permission. All candidates will remain confidential until finalist candidates are selected and ample time for notification will be given to finalist candidates.)

Bob Windham

Senior Consultant

bob.windham@carneysandoe.com