Position Statement for
Head of School
St. Andrew's School
Richmond, Virginia
July 1, 2022
THE OPPORTUNITY

St. Andrew’s School, (SAS), seeks a visionary and accomplished leader to partner with the Board of Directors and elementary school community in building upon the School’s history and reputation for providing an excellent, well-rounded, whole child educational experience. After twelve years of leadership, Dr. Cyndy Weldon-Lassiter, current Head of School, has decided to end her tenure in June 2022. While she will be greatly missed, we will embrace the exciting opportunity for a new leader to build on that strong SAS foundation. The next Head of School will continue our 127-year legacy in advancing the School’s upward trajectory with a focus on equitable access and opportunities for all students.
Founded by Grace Evelyn Arents in 1894, St. Andrew’s School is one of a handful of independent schools offering a tuition-free education, to 100% of our students, based on family household income. We are proud to be among one of the oldest schools with such a unique and noble mission.

Ninety-eight percent of our students and families identify as people of color and represent 10 localities in the Richmond-metro area. Applicants apply predominantly from word of mouth through our families, and there can be no greater testament than that.

The School building is a historic landmark, located in an urban setting in the City of Richmond and has held its place on the corner of Cherry and Idlewood for over a century. The school is part of the Oregon Hill neighborhood and is in close proximity to a number of local universities, including Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Union University, and University of Richmond. The SAS grounds include a large, open green space for student play and offers opportunities for outdoor classrooms and collaborative learning spaces. With one class per grade for kindergarten through fifth grades, the student body currently includes 96 students with a maximum class size of 16.

SAS is guided by a whole child approach to education and is committed to equity. We are a school designed to cultivate the individual talents of each student, and the school community-families, faculty, staff, and volunteers nurture the potential of each student through our six fundamentals: Academic Approach, Social and Emotional Learning, Wellness and Nutrition, Visual and Performing Arts, Family Engagement, and Graduate Support.

“SAS doesn’t just look at a child and their academic performance in the classroom—it looks at the family, which is extremely important. I am a licensed clinical social worker, so I understand the importance of working on all aspects.”
- Current SAS Board Member and Former SAS Parent
SAS believes in teaching all aspects of the child through a high-quality, hands-on program that emphasizes relationships and engagement. The School prioritizes Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), seeing it as the most important aspect in a child’s education. Trusting relationships are essential before true engagement in learning can begin, and small class sizes make it possible for teachers to build strong relationships with each student. As part of our SEL programming, our social worker sees individual students, offers group support, and supports teachers and family members. There is a strong focus on Project-Based Learning (PBL) where students work through questions that are relevant to their lives and the world around them.

SAS is a 1:1 school, providing each student access to a device for technology learning and integration. Every student learns how to play the violin and also receives instruction in visual arts. Students have access to and enjoy breakfast, two snacks, and lunch every day. As soon as the student is enrolled, they and their families learn about educational opportunities beyond SAS, so that they are well prepared to make school selections before graduating and starting middle school. All of this takes place as part of an Extended Learning Time model, where the school year runs from early-August to mid-June and the school day is 8:00AM-4:00PM. This extended school day and school year provides students with nearly 1,400 hours of instruction a year, as compared to the 900 hours required by our state.
PHILOSOPHY

At SAS we approach education from a whole child perspective. We know that intellectual engagement, physical well-being, creative expression, and emotional awareness are integral parts of the learning and growing process.

In our supportive environment, students grow to love learning and develop respect for themselves and the world around them. Family engagement and support is essential, as family members are partners in the education of their children.

MISSION

Embedded in our mission and founding as a school is the tenet that we are all worthy of love and respect. This is the work we do everyday, by helping our community feel valued individually and collectively, and reminding them in as many ways as possible that they matter.

As a school focused on developing students who are whole and healthy in mind and spirit, SAS fosters an environment of inclusiveness and belonging, and we educate ourselves on how to speak up and show up to create a more respectful and just society. By creating safe spaces for open dialogue, SAS enables our community to have courageous conversations about local and national issues impacting our community and to prepare each of us to better serve as "upstanders" rather than be "bystanders".
EPISCOPAL IDENTITY

The ideals expressed through our Episcopal Identity are aligned with our mission: being committed to social justice and peace among all people and respecting the dignity of every human being. These ideals are manifested through the following tenets outlined by the National Association of Episcopal Schools:

School Worship- creative, inclusive, and draws fully upon the liturgical resources of The Episcopal Church, and is a regular part of school life for all faculty and students

Community Life- reflection, prayer, and matters of the spirit are honored and cultivated and the physical, mental, and emotional health of all are supported and nurtured

Religious Formation and Study- meaningful and age-appropriate in teaching the Christian tradition, fostering dialogue with other faith traditions

Social Justice- integration of the ideals and concepts of equity, justice, and a just society throughout the life of the school; the embracing and honoring of diversity; and the inclusion of community service and service-learning as an integral part of the life of the school
KEY STATS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td>96</td>
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<td>Typical Class Size</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student/Faculty Ratio</td>
<td>8:1</td>
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<td>Total Number of Staff and Faculty</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>Total Number of Administrative Team</td>
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<td>Total Number of Volunteers</td>
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<td>Total Number of Board Members</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Towns/Counties Represented</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Students Receiving Full Scholarship</td>
<td>100%</td>
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SCHOOL CULTURE

The school culture is enhanced through our GRACE Expectations, and the intention of the schoolwide motto of “Growing with Grace” is integrated into all aspects of school life. GRACE Expectations are a set of community norms that promote learning, relationship building, and caring for the community. GRACE, in honor of our school’s founder, serves as an acronym for Grow your brain; Respond with kindness; Accept differences; Care for the community; and Exercise self-control.
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Every aspect of SAS’ program is designed with intention and linked to best practice, and through our whole child perspective, our six fundamentals are reflected as follows:

Academic Approach:
- Extended Day/Extended Year model
- Engaging instruction through Project-Based Learning
- Student-centered learning
- Cross-curricular lessons
- 1:1 technology
- Spanish language instruction
- Abundant enrichment opportunities
- Small class sizes

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):
- Full-time social worker addresses individual needs and supports families
- Responsive Classroom® connects academic and emotional growth
- The Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) model further strengthens SEL integration through whole child programming
- Weekly chapel supports SEL with spiritual development
- Mindfulness integrated into the school day
- Parents, faculty, students feel safe and respected
- Faculty/staff sensitive to social and emotional needs of students, feel well-equipped to foster social and emotional growth
Visual and Performing Arts:

- 100% of students learn how to play the violin through small group instruction
- Advanced Music Ensemble for fourth and fifth graders, with performances at local community events
- Process over product visual arts program
- Students gain confidence, develop community, pursue new interests
- Students perceive themselves as artists, enjoy pursuing artistic interests, music program imparts sense of belonging in the school community
- Community partnerships
  - SPARC: This program enhances the SAS whole child approach through visual and performing arts. Students gather on the school’s stage to practice and choreograph dance routines, culminating in a performance at the end of the year.
  - Minds in Motion (The Richmond Ballet): This partnership shows SAS students how dance can be used as a unique power to uplift lives and reinforce community.
  - ART180: Through this partnership, SAS students discover themselves and the world through artwork. This partnership aligns with visual and performing arts, and it also integrates science, Project-Based Learning (PBL), and social and emotional learning.
  - Lobs and Lessons: This is a youth enrichment program through Virginia Commonwealth University that strengthens life skills, promotes academics, and creates a path to higher education through the sport of tennis. It adheres to six core values: getting along with others; regulating emotions; being coachable; practicing healthy habits; learning the sport of tennis; and promoting college and career exploration.

“St. Andrew’s was a magical experience for my family. It exposed my children to wonderful opportunities. They had the opportunity to dance with the Richmond ballet, to play with the Richmond symphony.”

- Current SAS Board Member and Former Parent
Wellness and Nutrition:
- A Farm-to-School model
- Fresh, healthy, chef-prepared breakfast, lunch and two snacks served daily
- Family and student cooking classes
- PE classes two times a week
- Physical activity with three recesses per day
- Brain breaks as mental breaks between learning tasks to relieve stress and remain focused
- Students introduced to golf, bike riding and safety, tennis, basketball, yoga

Family Engagement:
- Families and faculty planning, leading, and attending St. Andrew’s School Alliance (SASA) events
- Participating in the SAS hiring process
- Participating in focus groups and committees for school-wide decisions (e.g. Emergency Response Team tasked with reopening the school during COVID-19)
- Participating on panels as experts for the Board of Directors and School events
- Classroom and/or school volunteers
- Attending Otter Assemblies
- Communicative and overall positive relationship between families and SAS, particularly between parents and grade level teachers
- Parents feel respected by teachers and perceive themselves as partners
Graduate Support:
- Collaboration with families to discuss middle school interests to help identify the ideal school
- Middle School Fair – area school representatives convene to connect, inform, and showcase offerings, starting in third grade, but open to all students
- Admissions support – guidance from Admissions Director ensures admission requirements are met and thorough applications are submitted
- Financial aid – provide direction to families for financial aid and scholarship applications
- School records – provide transcripts, testing records, letters of recommendations, and other record requests on behalf of families
- Alumni engagement – maintain relationship with mentoring, volunteer opportunities, and other support services
- Parents and students expressed a strong sense of academic preparedness for the middle school application and transition process

"Our school is in the city and our mascot is an otter. In our school, we have 96 students. Our grades are kindergarten to 5th grade. We have no homework. We have P.E, Art, STEAM, Spanish, Guidance, and library. We celebrate students’ birthdays by giving them books and singing happy birthday. We go on field trips and go to tennis lessons, Art museums, swimming lessons, and black history museums. We have half a hour of recess time. Our Art teacher is a little bit famous because he paints around the whole city. Our school is over a hundred years old. When we are on spring or summer or winter break, we have 2 or 3 weeks to chill out from school."

- 3rd Grade SAS Student
5 ESSENTIALS—RESEARCH-BASED

SAS’ whole child approach was designed with intention and is enhanced by the 5Essentials, a research-based school improvement system grounded in over 20 years of research at the University of Chicago. Not only is our program approach grounded in research, family members give us confidence in the effectiveness of our approach. A family member, whose son attends SAS, says he used to have trouble following directions, but that his teachers worked actively with her as a partner to move him forward. She says when he was younger, he just wanted to fit in. Now, he’s learning how to be a leader.

“In order to be a leader you need to listen and follow directions, so he’s working on that. He’s becoming the leader he wants to be. Before, he wanted to play football. Now, he’s not sure if he wants to play but he’s thinking about being a coach. He knows the game, but understands that he still needs to learn the rules. This has been a growing experience for both of us.”

- Current SAS Parent of Fifth Grade Student

SAS’ whole child approach meets students where they are and helps them achieve their definition of success.
RESPONSIBILITIES

- Executive responsible for all aspects of the School’s operations
- Advance excellence in the whole child approach to education
- Lead efforts to promote the school regionally and nationally
- Lead and inspire Staff and Faculty
- Collaborate with all school community constituents and donors
- Collaborate with Board on strategic planning
- Collaborate with Staff and Faculty to execute strategic vision
- Formulate budgets and fiscal responsibility
- Insure sustainability and growth

QUALIFICATIONS

- Executive leadership skills
- Commitment to social justice and experience with fostering inclusive and equitable communities
- Significant experience in direct supervision and leadership of faculty
- Proven educational leader with deep knowledge of teaching and learning
- Fundraiser with a keen understanding of donor relations
- Collaborative nature and keen ability to listen and connect with others
- Resilient thinker with ability to successfully adapt to adversity and keep the School moving forward
- Role Model who inspires others
- Communicate with diverse constituencies at all levels of the School
- Strategist and tactician balancing both long and short term goals
- Fiscal steward prioritizing financial responsibility and oversight
- Understanding of Episcopal Identity and its role in the School
- Personal conviction and devotion to success with a strong work ethic

TO APPLY

Please send resume/CV, letter of intent, list of five references with contact information (references will not be contacted until the candidate is notified), and statement of philosophy of education and leadership to John Faubert, john.faubert@carneysandoe.com, and Namita Bhattacharya, namita.bhattacharya@carneysandoe.com. Please do not contact the school directly.

St. Andrew’s School welcomes and strongly encourages applications from diverse candidates. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, national or ethnic origin, or other legally protected status.