Head of School Position Statement

St. Paul’s Episcopal School
Oakland, California
July 1, 2020
OVERVIEW

St. Paul’s Episcopal School began in 1975 with eleven students, four teachers and a vision. The vision – the dream – was to build a richly diverse school with a student body and faculty who reflected the unique demographics of Oakland and to guide young children into the wonders of learning in an atmosphere that provided strong academic growth led by skilled, dedicated teachers who embodied the broad cultural, spiritual and ethical mission of the school.

Today, almost 45 years later, St. Paul’s Episcopal School stands and delivers its mission: “St. Paul’s prepares students to be confident and skilled learners, cultivates in them a strong sense of purpose, and inspires them to be generous and active citizens of the world.” The School fosters the development of each child’s unique capabilities grounded in 1) Academic Rigor, 2) Service and Stewardship, 3) Spirituality, 4) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and 5) Fearless Learning.

The School has been at the forefront of independent schools regionally and nationally for its commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. This important value is held firm by every stakeholder as a vital part of the school’s mission and vision. With this extraordinary commitment comes the next set of challenges and opportunities for the school which will require a leader with substantial passion for and experience in DEI and social justice. The successful Head of School candidate will exemplify the desire and courage to lead challenging conversations secure in the understanding that they have the support of St. Paul’s trustees, faculty and parents to do so.

St. Paul’s K-8 program seeks to provide students with the skills, knowledge and mindset they need to flourish anywhere in the world. It is evident that the founders and the current school leaders, faculty and staff ignite the School’s values to action through a vibrant curriculum, an authentic connection to its neighborhood and city-wide community, and a dedication to service learning and civic engagement that bring academic skills to life.

The students, faculty, staff, and their families are a direct reflection of the diversity of the city of Oakland and the surrounding area racially, culturally, spiritually, ethically and economically. The School’s value for diversity, equity and inclusion is demonstrated in its’ demographics: 52% of the students receive some form of tuition assistance, a figure almost three times the national independent school average. The School is wholly committed to racial, cultural and socio-economic diversity, and is a model for inclusion, social justice and equity in private schools.
LOCATION AND CAMPUS

This vibrant K-8 school serves 380 students on two campuses, a block apart and fronting beautiful Lake Merritt. From its beginning, St. Paul’s has been a city school located in close proximity to the city center of Oakland and within walking distance to green spaces, athletics, recreation, museums, public libraries and city resources. In addition, the School uses many local and community resources, including its parks, Children’s Fairyland, and the YMCA in its day-to-day activities. The School is widely perceived as one that reflects the richness and largess of Oakland and celebrates the racial, ethnic, religious, family structure, gender identity and socio-economic diversity of the city, the East Bay and environs.

The instructional facilities are age-appropriate and support the K-8 educational program. The Lower School facility houses the K-5 classrooms, administrative offices, a library, a gymnasium, a Parish Hall/multipurpose room, outdoor playground and common play/meeting areas and a playfield atop the building. The Middle School houses grades 6-8, administrative offices, a library and multi-floor meeting areas.

Sufficient personnel and financial resources support plant maintenance and repair, and the Board of Trustees and School leadership recognize that the Lower School Building will soon require renovation and upgrades.

PROGRAM AND ITS PEOPLE

The K-8 program is guided by the core values that were instituted by the founders of the School:

- Keen Analytical Skills
- Depth of Knowledge
- A Generous Heart

There is no question that the students receive a rigorous and dynamic curriculum, meaningful service learning and develop a respect for diverse viewpoints. A fundamental understanding of the developmental state of cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth informs the curriculum, pedagogy and practice. Carefully designed learning experiences are integrated across subjects, drawing on powerful, relevant content and student interests to support the development of internal motivation and strong voices. Learning at St. Paul’s is contagious: thinking, questioning and understanding are emphasized over rote learning, and students are expected to creatively apply their knowledge and skills.

High expectations are bolstered by and coupled with appropriate scaffolding by teachers throughout the K-8 program. Students receive an appropriate amount of challenge or support that is commensurate to their needs and
abilities. St. Paul's expertly prepares students to be innovators and achievers who have the flexibility, skills, inclination and heart to solve problems, new and old, and to take responsibility for their thoughts, beliefs, articulations and actions.

Students in grades K-8 are immersed in Reading and Literature, Writing and Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Spanish, STEAM, Fine Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Community Engaged Learning.

Friday Chapel for everyone (including parents, grandparents and friends) is a central and integral component of the School's program. Families and children of all faiths, cultures, family traditions and structures are welcomed and present in the life of the School. Singular is the strong camaraderie among families who display a genuine warmth for each other and a depth of generosity and care for young and mature alike.

"Energetic, insightful, caring and competent" are words that characterize the faculty at St. Paul's. The teachers believe wholeheartedly in the mission of the School and are dedicated to the notion that "hands on" and collaborative teaching environments can empower children to actively discover, question, understand and succeed.

Classroom teachers possess certification for their respective age-level teaching assignments and have varying degrees of longevity at the School. All teachers hold bachelor’s degrees and a majority of faculty have earned advanced degrees. Teachers consistently model the School's commitment to respect, social justice and human rights in all they say and do.

An active parent body embraces school activities, ongoing events and successful fundraising. Volunteerism is strong and effective. The Parent Association Committees are also responsible for community outreach, for parent education, and for organizing opportunities for continuing dialogue and discussions among parents, faculty and administrators.
ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL: HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

The School is incorporated as St. Paul's Day School of Oakland and does business as St. Paul's Episcopal School, a non-profit entity separate from St. Paul's Episcopal Church. It retains a self-perpetuating board of trustees that is independent of the church vestry. The 21-member Board of Trustees plays a vital role in supporting the students and faculty as well as developing long-term goals for the School in concert with the Head of School. The structure of the Board is currently composed of Board Co-Chairs, an Executive Committee and standing committees: Audit; Center; Development; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Finance and Facilities; and Governance.

The administration is lean. The Head of School is supported by a Director of Finance and Operations, Lower and Middle School directors, a Director of Admissions, a Director of Development and Communications, and a Director of Programs. Hand in hand, the team works collaboratively to manage the day-to-day schedule, activities, operations and programming. The team meets regularly to review and prepare activities and upcoming events. The group values close-knit working relationships and mutual support.

Like other independent schools, St. Paul's primary revenue source is tuition while its primary expense is faculty and staff salaries. The School has an annual budget of over $12.3 million, an endowment of over $1.3 million, and cash reserves of $1.4 million. Over $3.4 million of the operating budget (28%) is committed to financial assistance yearly. Current tuition is $28,750 (K-4), $28,750 (grade 5) and $32,750 (6-8).

In recent years, the Board of Trustees and the Administration have advocated and paid particular attention to increasing faculty salaries. The School also took on long-term debt to fund the renovation of the middle school in 2005. As part of this debt, the School satisfies a yearly liquidity assessment and generates excess operating cash as a ratio to the total debt service.

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION and FINANCE

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FACTS ABOUT ST. PAUL’S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

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<td>Grades</td>
<td>K-8</td>
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<td>Students</td>
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<td>Faculty with Advanced Degrees:</td>
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<td>Percentage of Students Receiving Financial Assistance:</td>
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<td>Endowment</td>
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<td>Extra-curricular Offerings:</td>
<td>Before and After School Programs; Summer Camp; Middle School Sports; Service Learning Activities, Events and Programs</td>
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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

St. Paul’s Episcopal School is a K-8 school that has achieved an outstanding reputation since its founding. However, like all schools, it has its challenges and it is important for the next head of school to understand these challenges and the degree to which they impact the School’s capacity to continue to fulfill its bold mission.

St. Paul’s has a clear Mission and Values statement that resonates with the community and forms the basis for all of the school’s initiatives. To make good on that statement, the School has created an innovative and ambitious Portrait of a Graduate which translates the School’s Mission and Values into a series of specific goals and aspirations for its students.

In the 2018-19 school year, St. Paul’s launched Spark 2022, a multi-year strategic plan with a singular purpose of nurturing the spark that lives within each of its students. This plan is meant to drive students to become more intellectually curious and engaged, become problem solvers for the future through active community involvement, develop a better understanding of themselves, respect and appreciate the experience of others, and to more fully understand the world around them. Candidates for the Head of School position should read and become familiar with the plan that is available on the School’s website because it provides further insight into the mission of the school and clearly articulates our vision for St. Paul’s future.

The School now seeks a visionary and decisive leader who will pilot the school into the future in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, who will embody the school’s Mission and Values, and who will accomplish
the objectives set out in Spark 2022.

There is no doubt that the School’s vision today is focused on St. Paul’s strong future and its effective engagement with the Oakland community. While the vision stands on the shoulders of the School’s rich history and commitment to service learning, it also charts an ambitious journey that goes far beyond how independent schools tend to see their relationship with their immediate neighborhood. Our goal of integrating academic rigor with the School’s DEI and social justice initiatives to foster a diverse, involved community presents a compelling opportunity to build the School’s exciting future. The next head will have a critical role in helping to shape St. Paul’s future and its innovative K-8 programming.

Another important challenge is the high cost of living in Northern California and the East Bay area. It is becoming increasingly difficult for working families to become homeowners and it can be difficult to secure affordable rentals in Oakland and its environs. Affordability and accessibility are ever more important as the School strives to support greater quality, inclusion, respect and diversity.

**QUALITIES OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**

The Board of Trustees fully recognizes that there is no perfect candidate who possesses all the qualifications and attributes necessary for successful headship. But after careful reflection and dialogue, the Board feels strongly that the next Head of School must possess:

- A deep love for children and a single-minded focus on keeping them at the forefront as decisions are made;

- The ability to passionately champion the School, its mission, vision and programs;
• The capacity to further St. Paul’s bold vision and promise, which inspires diverse stakeholders and the skills to persuasively communicate with members of the entire community;

• The ability to think deeply about choices and the willingness to make difficult decisions while maintaining a commitment to the mission, vision and values of the School;

• Demonstrated expertise in understanding DEI, how diversity, equity and inclusion are integral to the vision and promise of this strong school, and an openness to welcome and work with individuals and groups sensitive to contemporary and complex educational issues and concerns;

• Instructional expertise and leadership in successful K-8 teaching and learning and effective experience in current best practices in pedagogy, assessment and curriculum;

• A proven track record of finding, attracting, motivating, evaluating, supporting and retaining outstanding diverse staff;

• Skill to strike the right balance between maintaining a warm, approachable presence and being a clear visionary and decisive leader who can manage difficult conversations and work through differences of opinion;

• The ability to think strategically and to act principally;

• Knowledge of one’s culture and to interact effectively with students and families of different cultures, including a sensitivity to behaviors, attitudes, and structures that enable cross-cultural work;

• Intuition, intellect, gravitas, wisdom, and willingness to learn, to lead and to embrace change; and

• A sense of humor and the energy and optimism necessary to find joy in the leadership of a dynamic school community.
APPLICATION PROCESS

St. Paul’s Episcopal School has retained Jim Scott and Doreen S. Oleson, Ed.D., from Resource Group 175 to lead the search. To apply, qualified candidates may apply online at: https://rg175.com/candidate/signup

The application includes a:
- Cover letter detailing the reasons for his or her interest in St. Paul’s Episcopal School and the head of school position
- Resume
- Statement of leadership and/or educational philosophy (not to exceed three pages), and
- Names and contact information for five references

Deadline to apply: Friday, December 20, 2019

For more information about the search, please contact:

Jim Scott
RG175 Consultant
jim.scott@rg175.com

Doreen Oleson
RG175 Consultant
doreenoleson@gmail.com

St. Paul’s Episcopal School welcomes and encourages applications from diverse candidates. St. Paul’s 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 in admission of otherwise qualified students or in providing access to the rights, privileges, programs, or activities generally available to all students and their families, including educational policies, scholarship and other financial aid programs, or athletic, extra-curricular, and other school-administered programs and activities.