

St. Mark's Episcopal School
Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Head of School
July 2025



Located three miles inland from the ocean on a pristine 11-acre campus in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, St. Mark's Episcopal School is a 460-student, PK2 - 8th grade school that enjoys a leading reputation for offering an academically-enriched program in a nurturing, Christian environment. With a long history of success and strong momentum heading into the future, St. Mark's Episcopal School seeks a dynamic Episcopalian educational leader to be the next head of school beginning July 2025.

The next head will find a talented and dedicated staff with teachers who are respected by parents and loved by their students. Having recently received multiple accolades from the FCIS accreditation team, St. Mark's is poised to build upon its legacy as a school that excels in expanding and nurturing each child's mind, heart, and spirit. Along with reading this position profile, interested candidates are encouraged to explore St. Mark's comprehensive [website](#) to get a sense of what makes St. Mark's programs and character unique.

Mission

The mission of St. Mark's Episcopal School is to provide an academically enriched program in a nurturing Christian environment.

Philosophy

St. Mark's Episcopal School believes in educating the whole child and is designed to provide a well-rounded educational environment that will help children develop and grow intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, and spiritually. St. Mark's recognizes that children are unique individuals with differing needs, talents, abilities, and gifts that must be nurtured and developed. The administration and faculty strive to allow children to recognize their individual talents and abilities while fostering opportunities for success in academic and social situations. St. Mark's emphasizes close cooperation with parents to augment skills taught at school, such as development of good learning and social habits.

The St. Mark's community believes that God created humans to live in community and one of our goals at St. Mark's is to help develop and build a Christian community. Through Christian education, we endeavor to help children become aware of being part of the body of Christ. We stress Christ's two great commandments – love of God and love of neighbor. Christian education is viewed through the Episcopal lens and our commitment to the promises of our baptismal covenant.

St. Mark's strives to recognize and encourage self-motivation and self-discipline in children and to help students develop a positive self-image. One of our most important obligations is to provide opportunities for children to assume responsibility for their own actions and for their own learning processes and to come to an understanding of cause and effect in human relationships and academic performance.

Quick Facts

Enrollment: 452

PK: 102

K-5: 282

6-8: 68

Attrition rate: 8.6%

BIPOC Students: 15%

Avg Class Size: 15

Tuition: \$8,275- \$22,518

Financial Aid: \$80,000

Remission: \$90,000

Cornerstone Scholarships:
\$100,000

Employees:

Faculty: 52

Teaching Assistants: 20

Administrators: 7

Non-teaching staff: 22

2023-24 Budget: \$9M

2022-23 Fundraising:

Annual Fund: \$220,807

53% parent participation

100% staff participation

100% school advisory

board participation

Annual Auction: \$193,263



Portrait of a Graduate

In the fall of 2023, St. Mark's created a "Portrait of a Graduate" to ensure the student experience is aligned around school-wide characteristics and values desired in all students.



Portrait of a Graduate



RESPECT

Student shows acceptance of their peers, themselves, adults, and their environment



PERSEVERANCE

Student is open to learning and willing to try new things, accepts feedback and demonstrates tenacity



CRITICAL THINKING

Student analyzes and interprets information from different perspectives to form an argument, solve a problem, or reach a conclusion



LEADERSHIP

Student promotes ownership, community, and cohesiveness among class members having a goal in mind and reaching it by planning, and is a positive role model for others



ACCOUNTABILITY

Student is self-motivated, sets goals, and works to accomplish goals with self awareness of their actions and attitudes



INTEGRITY

Student makes ethical and honest decisions and is willing to do what is right even when faced with obstacles or difficulties



COLLABORATION

Student works with peers and adults in an atmosphere of support to systematically solve existing and emerging problems as a team using positive and appropriate group communication skills



SERVICE

Student demonstrates commitment to service in the local and global community



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Student is proud, confident, and engages in opportunities for spiritual growth and development with a personal connection to God and upholds the community covenant



KINDNESS

Student is friendly, considerate, compassionate, empathetic and accepting of others' thoughts, ideas, feelings, and emotions



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History

The story of St. Mark's Episcopal School began in 1979, when the clergy and parishioners of [St. Mark's Episcopal Church](#) created a school as an outreach of the parish, holding a vision that it would offer preschoolers a loving and nurturing Christian environment in which to learn and grow. The magic caught on and enrollment grew steadily, inspiring the church to add a kindergarten in 1982. Additional elementary grades were added each year and the middle school opened in 1995.

St. Mark's continued to grow into the 21st century and new facilities were built to accommodate increased enrollment and the developmental needs of children. Robb Field and the adjacent outdoor pavilion complex were completed in 2001. Additions to this six-acre parcel of the campus, located west of Gardens East Drive, came in 2011 with a gymnasium and a spacious, modern youth center. Further expansion followed on the east side of campus with the completion of a two-story administration building shared by the Church and School. In October 2014, the School opened the Staluppi Center, a 26,450 square foot multi-purpose hall and performing arts center. Highlights of this centrally located, program-driven facility include a stage with a professional sound system, a fully equipped kitchen, a band room, a choral room, an art classroom, and a science lab.



Culture

As expressed by parents, students, faculty, and staff alike, “kindness” is a proud hallmark quality of the culture of St. Mark’s. Throughout the entire St. Mark’s community, there is an abiding appreciation for the Christian environment, attention to safety, and the universal efforts made to sustain a caring, deep-hearted community. Students shared that St. Mark’s is a school where newcomers are welcomed and teachers support and encourage their students while maintaining boundaries to ensure an environment conducive to learning exists. Parents are invested in the school’s success and are steadfastly supportive of the faculty; they value the blend of academic excellence and programs that promote authentic spiritual and character development. The [Parents’ Association](#) actively supports events to celebrate the students and faculty. True to its Episcopalian roots and identity, St. Mark’s serves a community of students representing a wide range of faiths and beliefs. Though Chapel attendance and Christian instruction are an integral part of the student experience, students are welcome to express their own beliefs about religion and spirituality.



Program

St. Mark's academic program is organized into three divisions: Pre-K, Lower School, and Middle School. Students in all three divisions are provided with balanced experiences in academics, arts, athletics, and community and spiritual life. Students and teachers enjoy special [traditions](#) that support community development and skill building. Teachers at St. Mark's know their students well, enabling them to provide individual attention, differentiated instruction, and caring support. Students at all levels are provided opportunities to pursue special interests with before-school and after-school, clubs, activities, and service learning programs. Students in grades 5-8 also may participate in the [athletic program](#).





Pre-K & Lower School

From the time children are greeted in the morning until they leave in the afternoon, Pre-K and Lower school students are actively engaged in independent and collaborative learning. The [Pre-K](#) program includes students in PK2, PK3, and PK4, and is overseen by the Director of Pre-K. The Pre-K curriculum focuses on the development of motor, language, and conceptual skills while building a foundation for effective social interaction and decision-making. Students learn through play and are offered experiences that develop reading readiness and number sense. The social-emotional curriculum emphasizes self-regulation, appropriate behavior in social situations, and respectful communication with friends and teachers.

[Lower School](#) students engage in core academic subjects including language arts, math, science, and social studies. A new math enrichment program for students in fourth and fifth grades was added in the 2022-2023 school year and subsequently added for students in second and third grades in 2023-2024. The head of the lower school is committed to developing a cross-curricular focus in the program. The STEAM, Educational Technology, Curriculum Coordinator, and Teaching & Learning Specialist collaborate with teachers to strengthen programs and expand teaching methods to effectively reach students of all learning styles. The curriculum is enhanced through special area classes that include Spanish, physical education, music (K-3), band (4-5), art, science, library, STEAM, and Christian education.





Middle School

Every aspect of the [Middle School](#) experience is intentionally structured to provide students with confidence, values, habits, skills, and knowledge to succeed in high school and beyond. Middle School classrooms are organized by subject matter, with students having different teachers for core subjects including, math, science, English, writer's workshop, Spanish, Christian education, and history. The instruction of skills is a priority and focuses on critical thinking, organization, developing study habits, analyzing text, research, and writing. Organizational skills and study habits are taught and modeled by teachers to help students transition to new levels of responsibility.

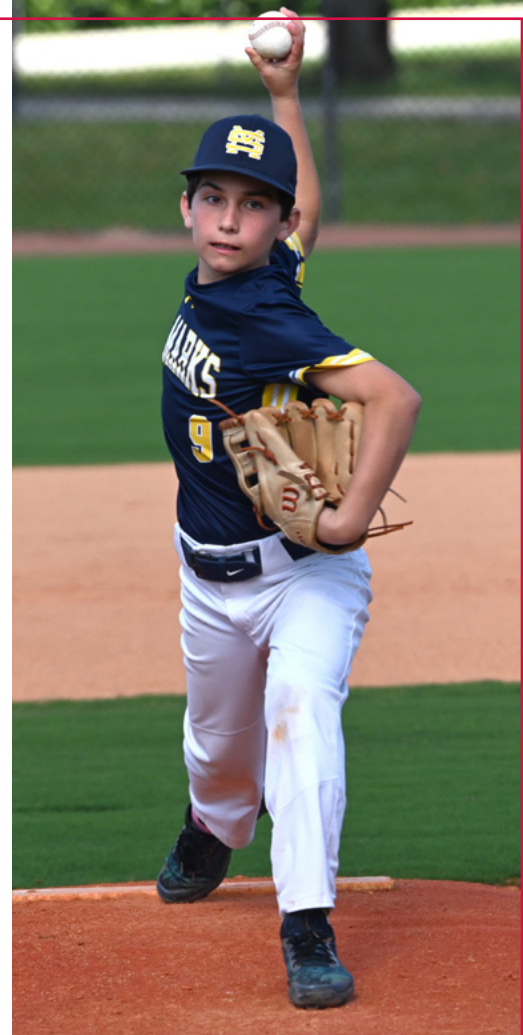
The head of middle school and faculty are working to ensure core enrichment courses and electives are provided at each grade level. The current plan calls for sixth grade to have world geography, STEAM, and executive skills for core enrichment. Seventh grade will have STEAM and marine science and eighth grade will have STEAM and entrepreneurship as core electives. Middle School students may elect to focus on an enrichment study for a full year or take multiple electives every quarter.



Governance

As a parish day school, St. Mark's Episcopal School is an outreach program of St. Mark's Church, Inc., with non-profit status coming from the Diocese of Southeast Florida. The Vestry, a group of lay leaders together with the Rector of the church, appoint individuals to serve on the School Advisory Board. The Vestry charges the School Advisory Board with the responsibility of establishing policies for the School which reflect the School's mission and philosophy.

The School Advisory Board has ten members: nine regular members and one Vestry Representative. Five of the members must be parishioners of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. The Rector is an ex-officio voting member of the Board, and the Head of School and Chief Financial Officer are also ex-officio non-voting members of the Board. Board members are appointed for staggered three-year terms to ensure continuity and stability. Advisory Board standing committees include Executive, Finance, Governance, Advancement, Endowment, and the Parents' Association.



Opportunities & Expectations for the Next Head of School

St. Mark's Episcopal School is a mission of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. For 45 years, the school has provided a values-based Episcopal education coupled with excellence in academic preparation. Accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) and a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES), St. Mark's adheres to the highest standards of Episcopal and independent education.

To build a foundation for the success of the next head of school, the board has appointed Scott Laird, former head of St. Mary's Episcopal School in Tampa, to serve as the interim head of school for the 2024-25 school year. The next long-term head of school will be an Episcopal educational leader who is student-oriented and experienced in unifying a school community around the mission and a vision for the future. The next head of school will have the opportunity to preserve the traditions embraced by the St. Mark's community while advancing the educational programs for future generations of students. Opportunities and expectations for the next head of school include:

- Establishing an inspirational vision that supports the Episcopal identity of St. Mark's Episcopal School and promotes the educational programs needed to prepare students for high school and beyond.
- Collaborating with the school constituents to develop a strategic plan and tactics to strengthen the unique identity of St. Mark's School.
- Developing a plan that attracts, on-boards, and supports outstanding faculty and staff who will be committed to extended careers at St. Mark's Episcopal School.
- Enhancing and aligning educational and spiritual programs across all grade levels, with a commitment to honoring time-honored traditions and practices while driving programs that prepare students for an ever-changing world.
- Ensuring that athletics, the arts, and other co-curriculars provide students with opportunities for enrichment and growth.
- Identifying a clear market position, including a public articulation of the value of students staying at St. Mark's Episcopal School through 8th grade.
- Communicating both internally and externally the unique brand and value proposition of St. Mark's while becoming the school's public face and chief cheerleader.

Candidate Attributes & Experiences

The new head of school will be a student-oriented, high-energy leader capable of engaging the greater St. Mark's community around a well-articulated vision. Being a confirmed Episcopalian, or committing to becoming confirmed upon appointment, is a prerequisite for the position.

In addition to the above, the successful candidate will demonstrate:

- A passion for providing students with an outstanding faith-based education that balances academic with spiritual formation
- Strong executive leadership with both internal and external communities
- Outstanding communication skills in both writing and speaking
- The ability to consider and manage multiple perspectives while having the courage to make difficult decisions and to say "no" when necessary
- An aptitude for building strong teams, including the appropriate delegation and clarification of responsibilities, setting clear expectations, and upholding accountability
- Conflict resolution skills, including the ability to listen and honor differing views while working to reach common ground
- The ability to unify a community around a bold vision, with a special focus on strengthening the school's reputation
- Transparency in decision making and authenticity in all relationships
- A commitment to creating and promoting robust professional development opportunities for teachers and staff
- Enthusiasm for developing and implementing strategic fundraising plans and initiatives
- Approachability and visibility, creating a strong sense of psychological safety for all members of the school community
- Strong business acumen with an understanding of both operational and strategic financial practices



Application Procedures

A search is underway to identify a new head of school by October 2024 who will begin his or her tenure on July 1, 2025.

The school has engaged the national executive search firm Educational Directions to assist the Search Committee and the St. Mark's Episcopal School community with the search. Please direct all inquiries, applications, and nominations to:

Mike Murphy mike.murphy@edudx.com

Jay Underwood jay.underwood@edudx.com

Candidates should express their interest and begin the application process as soon as possible. It is expected that interested candidates will contact the consultants prior to submitting their application portfolio for additional information. Candidates should submit:

- A letter of interest addressed to the Search Committee explaining their explicit interest in St. Mark's Episcopal School
- A current resume
- The names, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, and affiliation to the candidate of 5 professional references. References will be contacted after obtaining permission from the candidate. Finalists will be expected to provide 7 additional references.
- A personal statement detailing their professional journey and philosophy of education and leadership

Search Calendar

Application Deadline	August 1, 2024
Candidates notified of status	August 30, 2024
Semifinalist interviews (on site)	September 6 & 7, 2024
Finalist interviews (on site, 2 days)	September 15-24, 2024



Educational Directions and St. Mark's Episcopal School reserve the right to accelerate the search timeline for high-quality candidates. Compensation will be competitive with similar FCIS schools.

St. Mark's Episcopal School is a member of the Florida Council of Independent Schools, National Association of Episcopal Schools and National Association of Independent Schools and follows the National Association of Independent School Principles of Good Practice regarding head of school searches.

St. Mark's Episcopal School is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and actively seeks a diverse and broad spectrum of qualified candidates for the head of school position. St. Mark's Episcopal School and Educational Directions do not discriminate against qualified applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sexual identity, age, or physical disability.