



**WHY ST. JOHN'S?**  
**WHY EPISCOPAL?**

## WHY EPISCOPAL?

*“Episcopal schools are Christian communities whose missions integrate spiritual formation into all aspects of the educational experience. Episcopal schools are most distinctive when they are true to this mission and when they do so in the graceful and inclusive manner which is the hallmark of the Anglican approach to education over the centuries.”*

- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe that God calls us to love. Because we view all of our students as children of God, we nurture and support them because they are a reflection of God's love and hope for the future.

## WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPAL QUALITIES THAT DISTINGUISH A SCHOOL AS EPISCOPAL?

Episcopal schools are populated by myriad people from diverse religious, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The broad range of individuals who attend Episcopal schools is a hallmark of their missions. It is also a distinguishing characteristic of these schools that they seek to integrate religious and spiritual formation into the overall curriculum and life of each school community. Episcopal schools invite all who attend and work in them—Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians, Christians and non-Christians, people of no faith tradition—to seek clarity about their own beliefs and religions and to honor those traditions more fully and faithfully in their own lives. Above all, Episcopal schools exist not merely to educate, but to demonstrate and proclaim the unique worth and beauty of all human beings as creations of a loving, empowering God.

## IDENTIFIERS OF AN EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

Respect and dignity for all through the *Baptismal Covenant*

Encourage questioning and the development of strong critical thinking skills

Seek and serve God in Christ in all persons

Welcome people of all faith traditions – *E pluribus unum*, “Out of many, one”

Regular worship that adheres to the *Book of Common Prayer*

Teach scripture as the revealed Word of God advised by tradition, reason, and guidance of the Holy Spirit

## WHY ST. JOHN'S ?

**St. John's Episcopal School, the oldest Episcopal school in Dallas, is proud to be a member of NAES, the National Association of Episcopal Schools. At St. John's we are intentional about our culture, and we are dedicated to fostering a culture that values each student's uniqueness and celebrates differences as a reflection of our Episcopal Identity. We welcome people of all faiths as we seek to embody the mission and values of our School.**

## EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS

Ensure that their missions are built on the sure foundation of a Christian love that guides and challenges all who attend our schools to build lives of genuine meaning, purpose, and service in the world they will inherit.

In religious curriculum, freely discuss faith and spirituality as the foundation for a child's moral compass and meaning in life.

Commit time and resources not just to furthering what a child knows and can do, but also developing who the child is and will grow to be.

## OUR ROOTS

In 1953, St. John's Episcopal Church incorporated St. John's Episcopal School as its primary outreach to assist parish families and the East Dallas community by offering an excellent education in a Christian environment. Today, St. John's serves approximately 500 students from preschool through eighth grade. The School remains one of the church's primary outreaches: the chaplains conduct daily chapel services; parishioners serve among other community members on the School Board; and the church and School collaborate on activities and events on our shared property. Since our inception so many years ago as a small, East Dallas school, St. John's has grown to achieve accreditation by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS) and the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES). We also maintain membership in the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES).

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To learn more about St. John's Episcopal School,

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## **FIVE TENETS**

**Academic excellence**

**Corporate worship (Episcopal/Christian chapel)**

**Religious studies based on basic biblical content**

**Meaningful and integrated community service and service learning projects**

**An inclusive community where the dignity of every human being is respected**

## **OUR MISSION AND TENETS OF AN EPISCOPAL EDUCATION**

Guided by the School's mission which commits us to a program of academic excellence designed to train the mind, strengthen the character, and enrich the spirit of each student in a Christian environment, the tenets of an Episcopal education inform our decisions and actions and shape the environment we create for students. The principles also influence our faculty, staff, administration and trustees in their roles.

## **CHAPEL**

Chapel is integral to who we are as a School community and is a foundational part of the St. John's student experience. All students participate in developmentally appropriate chapel services, which provide opportunities for reflection and spiritual growth. Students from religious and non-religious backgrounds are inspired to consider their place in the larger world and how they can lead lives of meaning, purpose, faith, and integrity.

While chapel incorporates liturgical elements that are distinctly Episcopal, we seek to provide every student with an opportunity to explore and understand their own spiritual development. St. John's does not seek to convert others, but rather seeks to include community members of other faiths while presenting a biblical message.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN CHAPEL**

All students are invited to serve in chapel, and as students progress through Middle School, they may also join Student Vestry to engage more fully in the chapel experience. Our Chaplains encourage the students' creative involvement in chapel, with students participating in chapel skits, Advent and Holy Week celebrations, Lessons and Carols, and the end-of-year Sheepfold chapel service, a traditional ceremony wishing eighth graders farewell.

## STUDENT FORMATION

At St. John's we are dedicated to creating, promoting, and maintaining an atmosphere in the School that is conducive to learning and supporting the whole child.

### PRIMARY SCHOOL

Each week, students in preschool through kindergarten attend Godly Play classes. Godly Play is a Montessori-based method of spiritual formation that explores God's presence in the lives of our students. The Godly Play curriculum engages what is most exciting about religious education: God inviting us into—and pursuing us in the midst of—Scripture and spiritual experience. Godly Play practice teaches us to listen for God and to make authentic and creative responses to God's call in our lives through story, wonder, and play. (Godly Play Foundation)

### LOWER SCHOOL

Students in first through fourth grade have regularly scheduled Student Formation classes. These consist of Godly Play instruction, Lionhearted Values lessons, digital citizenship, and social-emotional learning. Depending upon the lesson focus, Lower School student formation classes are led by our Primary and Lower School Chaplain, School Counselor, Primary and Lower School Dean of Students, or a classroom teacher.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

As a part of the multi-faceted curriculum in Middle School history and religion, St. John's students learn about different faiths and traditions. In fifth grade, students study the Old Testament of the Bible before moving to sixth grade where they learn about the stories in the New Testament. In seventh grade World Religions, they learn about five major religious faiths: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. They study not only the similarities and differences of these belief systems and traditions, but also the cultural and historical impact on the world. During their course of study, students spend time discussing the symbolism of these faiths and how that symbolism might play out in other faith traditions. Finally, in eighth grade, students take Ethics and learn to distinguish between personal, family, School, and community values while exploring connections between values, decision-making, and actions.

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To learn more about the value of an Episcopal education for your child,

**VISIT [WWW.STJOHNSSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.STJOHNSSCHOOL.ORG)**





## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Through a variety of service opportunities at each grade-level, St. John's students learn to give of their own time and talent to make the world a better place. A people-first approach to service, which places the person before the need, helps our students develop a practice of service that is grounded in compassion and humility.

## PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

The Portrait of a Graduate is a course of study that cultivates a love of learning and introspection in each of our eighth graders so they are prepared for the high school admission process. St. John's graduates are skilled critical thinkers who appreciate the process of learning. They are compassionate individuals who share a healthy respect for the abilities and perspectives of others. They are confident, articulate, and equipped to recognize community needs and to give of themselves through service while adhering to the School's Code that commits to respect, responsibility, honesty, and care. Each student is unique, and as they discover their strengths and passions, they embody the Portrait of a Graduate which incorporates:

**SCHOLARSHIP:** Loves to learn, motivated by genuine curiosity. Brings optimism, confidence and discipline to solving problems through the use of critical thinking skills.

**CHARACTER:** Strives to live with integrity. Shows tenacity and resiliency. Practices compassion, respectfulness, and altruism

**CONNECTIONS:** Collaborates in a supportive, helpful fashion. Communicates clearly, correctly and gracefully. Community- and globally-conscious.

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL**

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In our commitment to diversity and equity, St. John's Episcopal School does not discriminate regarding race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, genetic information, disability, pregnancy, marital status, religion, military status, and/or any protected category. This commitment extends to our employment, educational, admission, and financial aid policies, and other school-administered programs.