



Principal

SEARCH PROSPECTUS



ST. MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA

www.stmaryschoolaiken.com

START DATE – JULY 2025

Partners in Mission School Leadership Search Solutions, LLC



THE HISTORY

The history of St. Mary Help of Christians School goes back to the turn of the century. Established by Ursuline nuns in 1900 as a boarding school for wealthy young ladies, St. Angela Academy received its name from the Ursulines' founder, St. Angela Merici. In 1906, at the request of their bishop, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy from Charleston, South Carolina, assumed the school's operation. The school then served the educational needs of female boarding students as well as both male and female day students. In 1939, Bernard Baruch, a friend of James Byrnes, helped the Sisters finance a red brick building, an addition to the old school that is now a part of St. Mary Help of Christians Parochial School.

When the Savannah River Plant came to Aiken in 1950, the Catholic population skyrocketed. Bishop Emmet Michael Walsh wanted a parochial grammar school established. Accordingly, the brick building on York Street became St. Mary Help of Christians Parochial School supported by student tuition and the hard work of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. Thus, St. Angela's private grammar school ceased to be, and only the high school retained that name.

The Sisters continued in the grade school, a parochial school under the jurisdiction and support of St. Mary Help of Christians Parish. In 1955, the Dominican Sisters from Adrian, Michigan took charge of St. Mary Help of Christians School, staffing it until 1970 when they left. Again, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy assumed the administration and continued to provide a Catholic education to those parents seeking one for their children.

FAST FACTS



74%

Catholic students enrolled



240+

current enrollment



16:1

student/teacher ratio

at St. Mary Help of Christians School until the close of St. Angela Academy in June 1988. Since that date, the administrative duties of the school have been the responsibility of a Catholic lay principal.

For more than a century, St. Mary's School has fostered faith while cultivating curiosity and character in every student. Today, St. Mary's School continues its mission of Preparing the Way with its addition of the St. Mary's STEM Center and its continued commitment to excellence.

THE MISSION

The mission of St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic School, in partnership with parents, is to form Christian leaders who are faithful, prepared, and courageous.

Embracing the Family - Nurturing the Spirit - Challenging the Mind - Supporting the Journey - Preparing the Way

Embracing the Family

When students enroll, the entire family enrolls. Families have an open invitation to attend Mass, parent prayer, Stations of the Cross, and parent lunches. Annual events that promote family involvement include PTO Events, athletic dinners, community service projects, and annual Memorial Day programs, Christmas programs, and Gingerbread Day. A weekly e-newsletter also keeps families abreast of special events and classroom updates.





Nurturing the Spirit

To teach as Jesus did, by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is the backbone of the Catholic school system. St. Mary's School teaches the Christian message to form a Christian community and reach out in service to all its neighbors. Through daily prayer, daily religious instruction, weekly Mass, and the performance of some of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, students grow closer to their Creator and learn to recognize Him and His people.

Challenging the Mind

Formulated per diocesan directives, the curriculum at St. Mary's builds on a solid foundation of math and reading skills. The academic program includes language arts (English, spelling, vocabulary development, composition skills, and handwriting), social studies, science, computer literacy, health and safety, and religion. Enrichment is provided through courses in music, art, physical education, foreign language, and library skills.

Supporting the Journey

St. Mary's provides the opportunity to participate in various, enriching academic activities including academic fairs, clubs, Area 1 Spelling Bee, National Geographic's Geography Bee, and various art and essay contests.

Preparing the Way

All students are encouraged to become "good citizens of this world, loving God and neighbor and enriching society with the leaven of the Gospel, and who will also be citizens of the world to come, thus fulfilling their destiny to become saints" (Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools).



FAST FACTS



100%

certified teachers



2,400+

registered families
in the parish



\$7.5M

state-of-the-art STEM
center opening this Fall



Since 1900, the school community has inspired inquisitive students to be thinkers, doers, explorers, builders, debaters, challengers, storytellers and dreamers. At St. Mary's, students are formed to be goal-oriented and community minded, to be resourceful while being thoughtful, and to flourish in faith.

School Accreditation

St. Mary's maintains accreditation by AdvancED/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Accreditation by AdvancED indicates that St. Mary's meets staffing and curriculum requirements, undergoes a periodic, comprehensive self-study, conducts annual updates, and hosts an accreditation review team of professional educators every five years to visit the school, assess the accuracy of the school's self-study, and provide recommendations for improvement. St. Mary's has been accredited since 1974.

Teacher and Staff Accreditation

St. Mary's primary and elementary or early childhood teachers are certified and have bachelor's or master's degrees, many with coursework beyond the master's degree level. Junior high and "special area" teachers are either certified in their subject areas or are "highly qualified," meaning they have at least a bachelor's degree and have majors or minors in their assigned subjects. St. Mary's professional staff (teachers, librarian, and principal) participate in at least five days of professional development training each school year.



THE ACADEMICS

Kindergarten at St. Mary's

The beginning of a child's academic journey is one of the most exciting – and emotional – stages in a parent's life. While we are eager to send our children out into the world to thrive academically, we also want them to be nurtured, fostered, and supported along the way. With the perfect balance of faith-based and academic instruction, the kindergarten at St. Mary's aims to model what you as a parent teach and value at home.

As children enter kindergarten at a variety of levels, St. Mary's incorporates a semi-structured setting that encourages both listening skills and cooperative play with a balance of active and quiet activities. In addition to "the three Rs," children receive instruction from specialists in physical education, computer literacy, music, art, and foreign language. Kindergartners also explore materials and interact with peers during teacher-guided centers. St. Mary's multi-educational approach instills enthusiasm, creativity, and sensitivity in every child, preparing them for success in elementary school.

Elementary School at St. Mary's

Instilling a lifelong love of learning, devotion to God, and commitment to community is at the heart of the St. Mary's elementary school curriculum. In self-contained classrooms, certified teachers utilize the best instructional practices, the latest classroom technology, and engaging, experiential activities to harness curiosity and teach the fundamentals of math, science, health, social studies, reading, and writing. Recognizing the importance of introducing students to the latest digital technology, the school believes that learning to write in cursive is essential for development, literacy, and self-expression, and include traditional handwriting in our elementary school curriculum.



With a philosophy that a well-rounded education creates well-rounded citizens, elementary students at St. Mary's also receive regular instruction in art, music, physical education, computer literacy, foreign language, and religion. From daily prayer and weekly Mass to daily recess and annual events, students pray together and play together to build a strong sense of community.

Middle School at St. Mary's

Advancing to middle school is an exciting time for students. Greater independence, the opportunity to participate in more extracurricular activities, and the pursuit of personal interests are all rewards of reaching the middle school years. At the same time, more rigorous course work and peer relationships can be challenging at this age. Now more than ever, students need a positive learning environment centered in faith.

The junior high curriculum at St. Mary's is designed to ignite students' passions, guide them through these sensitive years, and prepare them to succeed in high school and beyond. Starting in the sixth grade, students begin to change classrooms every period throughout the day, follow their own schedule, take on more challenging course work, and develop a deeper understanding of God's word. For students meeting the course



requirements, local high schools recognize Spanish 1, German 1, Algebra or Algebra 1 honors, Geometry or Geometry honors, and English 1 or English honors for high school credit.

Aiming to ignite students' passions and their unique gifts from God, a rotating selection of non-graded elective classes is also available to middle school students during 9th period. Teachers select course topics they are passionate about which may include cooking, cake decorating, personal fitness, 3-dimensional art, robotics, book club, sustainable gardening, interior design, Eurogames and more.

THE ST. MARY'S STEM CENTER-OPENING THIS FALL

Exploration + Discovery = Success. Turning Learners Into Leaders.

In our technology-driven world, today's careers require a solid foundation in science, engineering, and math. The St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic School STEM Center will be a leading-edge learning center, preparing students to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, and idea generators. Combining the most modern technologies with collaborative, hands-on learning, the center will augment traditional instruction to close learning gaps while opening the minds of all St. Mary's students.

Mapping Out A Brighter Future

St. Mary's has a long history of producing extraordinary thinkers, learners, and leaders by challenging minds, nurturing the spirit, supporting the journey, and preparing the way to be good citizens of the world. Now, with the addition of the STEM Center, St. Mary's is poised to offer the highest level of education within the safe and nurturing confines of Aiken's only completely gated elementary and middle school.



Building Highlights

Outdoor Lab
 Engineering, Design & Build Classroom
 Material Science Engineering Lab
 Robotics Lab
 Coding, Math & Technology Lab
 Cybersecurity & AI Classroom
 Information Systems & Technology Integration Classroom
 Maker Space Collaborative Learning Classroom (2 of these)
 Virtual Reality, 3D/4D Lab
 Aquatics Technology Area

Expanded Curricula

Technology + Engineering

Coding
 Engineering Design
 Engineering Studies
 Cybersecurity
 Robotics
 Artificial Intelligence
 Virtual Reality
 Software Development
 Computer Science

Science

Horticulture
 Ecology
 Habitats
 Physical Science
 Space Science

Marketing

Web Design
 Drone Exploration
 Social Media Analytics

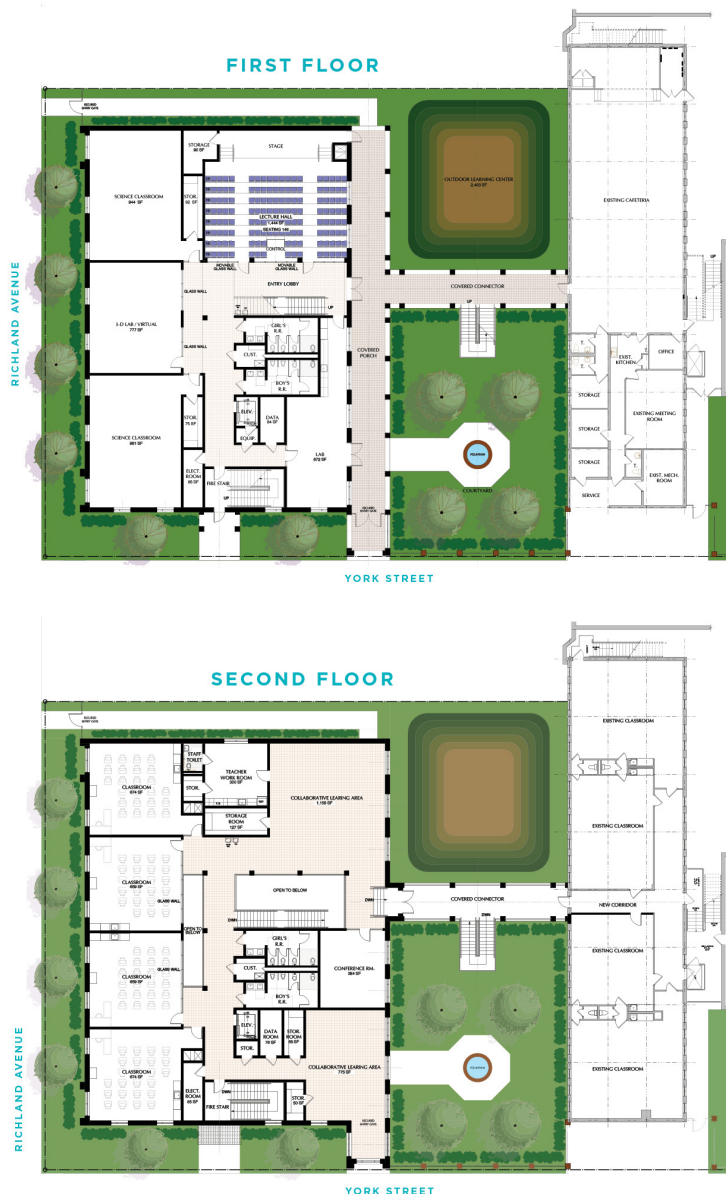
Investigative

Forensics

Creative Inventions

Toy & Instrument Design
 Computer-Generated Interior Design
 Video Game Design

The STEM Center will be led by a STEM Specialist with a strong background in science, technology, engineering, and math who will select, integrate and instruct curricula as well as plan professional development, programs, and interaction with the greater community.



DESIGN + BUILD • HYPOTHESIZE + TEST • CREATE + ANALYZE



THE EXTRACURRICULARS

How We Sing, Swing, Kick, Sprint, Serve and Score

St. Mary's believe that every child has God-given talents, strengths, and interests to be encouraged and cultivated. From participating in a sport to singing in the Youth Choir, there is an extracurricular activity at St. Mary's that suits every student's interests.

Athletics

St. Mary's School sports teams compete in the highly competitive Augusta-Aiken Middle School League. Fifth through eighth grade students with qualifying academics and discipline records may participate.



Fall Sports include girls' volleyball, tennis for boys and girls, golf for boys and girls, and cross country for boys and girls. Winter Sports include basketball for boys and girls with A and B teams, cheerleading for girls, bowling for boys and girls, and pickleball for boys and girls. Spring Sports include soccer for boys and girls, and track and field for boys and girls.

Clubs, Choir & Student Council

In addition to Athletics, St. Mary's School offer several clubs and extracurricular activities for students to show off their talents, learn valuable skills, and contribute to their school and greater community.

National Junior Beta Club

The National Junior Beta Club supports academic excellence, fosters and develops leadership, and aids in character development by encouraging individual achievement as well as community service. Junior Beta Club membership is open to all students in grades 6-8 who maintain an average of at least a B- (83) in each academic subject.



Yearbook Club

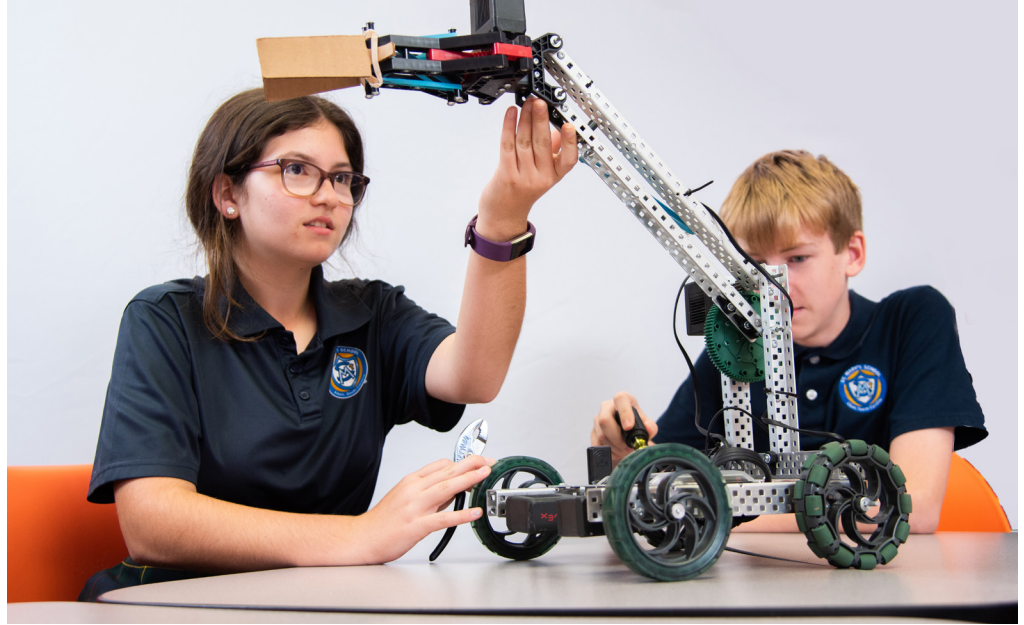
The Yearbook Club is open to 6th-8th grade students. Club members learn basic digital design in a web-based program and are responsible for the layout of the yearbook as well as ad sales.

School Choir

Students in the 3rd through 8th grades may try out for the Youth Choir which has a maximum of 25 members due to space in the choir loft. Auditions are held at the beginning of each school year. Choir members sing weekly at our school Mass on Wednesdays and have an opportunity to cantor for the Responsorial and the Alleluia each week at school mass. Choir members also sing special songs during our Christmas and Patriotic programs. Practices are held once a week before school.

Student Council

Student council helps to promote a Christian atmosphere in the school, a harmonious relationship between the faculty and the student body, and the general welfare of the school and its organizations. Students in the 6th through 8th grades may run for a student council position.



THE POSITION

As the spiritual, educational, and managerial leader, the principal plays a vital role in fulfilling the school's mission. Charged with implementing the philosophy, mission, and objectives, the principal oversees the overall academic and business management of the school, ensuring its alignment with Catholic morals, values, and educational standards. Responsibilities include fostering the professional growth of staff, monitoring students' academic progress, and nurturing positive relationships within the school community. With a student body spanning from K through 8th grade and the addition of its state-of-art \$7.5M STEM Center, the principal will guide the school in providing a 21st century and Christ-centered education. Reporting directly to the Parish Pastor/Administrator, this position serves as a critical liaison between the school and the parish community, embodying the values of faith, leadership, and excellence.



THE OPPORTUNITY

St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic School presents a unique opportunity to lead transformative initiatives, foster a culture of innovation and academic excellence, and nurture a vibrant school community grounded in Catholic values. With a focus on collaboration, strategic planning, student-centered leadership, and all areas of operational vitality, the new principal has the potential to impact the lives of students and families and shape future generations of leaders and learners. St. Mary presents many opportunities to shape and enhance the school's educational landscape. With a clear focus on innovation, community involvement, and academic excellence, St. Mary offers a platform to lead transformative initiatives and foster a dynamic learning environment.



One of the primary opportunities awaiting the new principal's leadership is preparing and opening the STEM center. This endeavor presents a chance to spearhead curriculum development, optimize facilities, and nurture staff expertise in STEM education. By leveraging cutting-edge technology and hands-on learning experiences, the principal can empower students to become critical thinkers and problem solvers, laying the groundwork for their future success in STEM fields.

Furthermore, the goal of establishing a 3K-4K program offers an exciting prospect of expanding the school's reach and providing early childhood education rooted in Catholic values. The principal's role in conceptualizing and implementing this program will be pivotal in shaping the educational journey of the youngest learners, fostering a nurturing environment where they can thrive intellectually, spiritually, and socially.

In line with the school's commitment to academic excellence, there is an opportunity to increase enrollment while maintaining optimal class sizes, ensuring personalized attention and tailored instruction for every student. This task requires strategic planning, effective marketing strategies, business and financial acumens, and a focus on enhancing the educational experience to attract and retain families within the school community.





Additionally, the goal to increase school staff to accommodate more sections of students at every level underscores the importance of fostering a supportive and collaborative faculty environment. As the instructional leader, the principal will play a pivotal role in recruiting, developing, and empowering a team of dedicated educators passionate about student success and embodying the school's mission and values.



Moreover, the commitment to introducing and incorporating additional STEM courses reflects a forward-thinking approach to curriculum development, equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. The principal's leadership in this area can inspire innovation, creativity, and interdisciplinary learning, enriching the educational experience for all students.

THE CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will embody a unique blend of leadership, educational expertise, spiritual commitment, strong business and financial acumens, and a profound dedication to Catholic values and the well-being of all students. Candidates should possess effective communication, strategic thinking, and decision-making skills. They should be well-versed in curriculum development, instructional strategies, and assessment methods to ensure the school's continued success.



Candidates must be practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church, and unabashed and unapologetic in their commitment to upholding and promoting Catholic morals, values, teachings, and traditions. They should foster an environment where faith is integrated into every aspect of school life, working closely with the Pastor to foster a nurturing and inclusive spiritual environment that encourages and supports academic excellence. Candidates are expected to have an advanced degree in an education-related field and five or more years of teaching experience. Recent Principal experience leading a Catholic elementary school community is preferred.

FAST FACTS



124

years of history



20

sport teams

QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

- Grounded in a strong Catholic faith, guiding all actions and decisions, while fostering empathy and care to create a nurturing environment where students can thrive.
- Your heart must be filled with joy and a deep love of children and learning!
- Demonstrates visionary leadership, effectively balancing the school's current needs and traditions with the school community's future needs.
- Passionate about education, dedicated to fostering a love of learning in students while ensuring a structured and safe environment.
- Committed to the school's mission and dedicated to its success, leading by example, and embodying the values and expectations of the school.
- Energizes students by implementing innovative programs and activities that promote a spirited learning environment, while maintaining a professional demeanor and balanced decision-making.
- Well-versed in all areas of operational vitality and business management.
- Exhibits robust leadership by setting high standards and cultivating a supportive environment, actively engaging with students to understand their needs and perspectives.
- Establishes a challenging academic environment encouraging growth and achievement, involving all stakeholders.
- Approachable and respectful, fostering open communication, trust, and community engagement.
- Maintains a visible and available presence within the school community.
- Proactively solves problems and demonstrates financial acumen in managing school budgets and resources.

ABOUT THE REGION

Aiken is located just over the Georgia state line and has a population of 32,000. Aiken is in Aiken County and is one of the best places to live in South Carolina. Living in Aiken offers residents a sparse suburban feel and most residents own their homes. In Aiken there are a lot of parks. Many young professionals and retirees live in Aiken. The Catholic population in Aiken is over 20%, compared to 6%-7% statewide.





Aiken is a captivating city where history, charm, and modern vitality converge in an intimately Southern experience. With roots dating back to the early 19th century, Aiken boasts a rich history steeped in equestrian heritage, cultural diversity, and a strong sense of community. From its legendary training tracks that have nurtured world-renowned thoroughbreds to its intriguing arts scene that celebrates creativity in all forms, Aiken is a vibrant city woven from threads of tradition and innovation.

Aiken's history sparkles with stories of historic railroad connecting Aiken to the rest of the country, ushering in new eras of growth and development for the town. The town's significance further deepened as the Winter Colonists — Gilded Age glitterati who traveled south seeking respite from the cold winters of the Northeast — brought with them a legacy for gracious living and a fondness for equestrian pursuits, both of which continue to shape our city today.

Today, the community prides itself on offering a range of experiences that invites residents and travelers alike to pursue their passion. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast seeking picturesque trails and serene parks, a shopaholic exploring charming boutiques, a culinary connoisseur craving new and exciting flavors, or a history buff uncovering stories of the past, Aiken invites you to immerse yourself in its historic streets and enjoy your time in the beating heart of SC's Thoroughbred Country.

Perhaps what truly sets Aiken apart is its unique way of embracing life – a fusion of Southern hospitality, a deep connection to the equestrian world, and a thriving cultural landscape that captures the spirit of both past and present. No matter what you're searching for in Aiken, rest assured, you're guaranteed to be welcome like no other place on earth.





APPLICATION PROCESS

The Search Committee and Pastor are on a fast-track to identify and secure the school's next Principal. All inquiries and applications will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and with the greatest respect. The successful candidate will be expected to assume the responsibilities of the position in July 2024.

To apply, please submit the following four documents, confidentially and as separate PDF attachments in one email to mikefurey@partnersinmission.com.

- Letter of Interest that aligns your experiences and skill sets with the current needs of the school as you understand them.
- Statement of Catholic educational leadership philosophy.
- Current resume with all appropriate dates included.
- List of five references with names, relationships, phone numbers, and email addresses. References will not be contacted without your knowledge and approval.
- Please include "St. Mary Help of Christian Catholic School" in the subject field



Assemble all of the application materials in one email to:

Michael Furey, Partner
Partners in Mission School Leadership Search Solutions, LLC
mikefurey@partnersinmission.com
570-730-2655 (Mobile)
www.partnersinmissionslss.com



Partners in Mission School Leadership Search Solutions is the retained search division of Partners in Mission, the nation's leading full-service consulting firm focused exclusively on developing excellence in Catholic school advancement and leadership. As partners among ourselves and with our clients' missions, we value, understand, and embrace the importance of Catholic education in our personal and professional lives — and remain committed to ensuring its strength and vitality for years to come. Engaged by religious and school communities, boards and dioceses, our team of dedicated search consultants have identified and secured mission-driven professionals to serve in a myriad of diverse Catholic school and diocesan leadership positions from Massachusetts to Hawaii.

WWW.PARTNERSINMISSIONSLSS.COM

Partners in Mission School Leadership Search Solutions

8 Nicklaus Way | Mashpee, MA 02649