



Stella Maris Academy

SEARCH PROSPECTUS



HEAD OF SCHOOL

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

stellamarissf.org

START DATE - JULY 2025

Partners in Mission School Leadership Search Solutions, LLC



MISSION

Guided by the Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, the mission of Stella Maris Academy is to collaborate with parents in forming students for life on earth as a journey to heaven. By cultivating the love of Wisdom and the capacity to seek truth, goodness, and beauty in all things, the Academy teaches young people to exercise their freedom wisely through a rigorous and integrated Catholic liberal education.

VISION

The purpose of Catholic liberal education is to provide a full intellectual, moral and spiritual development so that students can appreciate truth, beauty, and goodness. A classical education understands all knowledge as integrated through the Logos, Jesus Christ, through whom one grasps the rational order of creation. While classical education embraces all of the liberal arts and sciences, it understands theology as an integrating principle and faith as animating our love of learning. While classical education differs from the more “pragmatic” approaches, which focus on college and career readiness, it is no less practical.

By focusing upon the development of the memory and imagination, multiple languages, mathematical intelligence, logical and rhetorical ability, and art and music, students learn to form and ask fundamental questions, read thoughtfully, write eloquently, and articulate clearly. Through a virtues-based curriculum, classically formed students learn to seek the greater good with resiliency, acting with balanced justice and working cooperatively with others.

FAST FACTS



2021

new school founded



50%

student enrollment growth
for 2024-25



87

students

A classically-trained student develops a balance of resilience, creativity, analytical capacity, and entrepreneurial spirit to excel in any field, as well as the academic excellence to compete effectively with any contemporary measure of student achievement.

OVERVIEW

Located near the beautiful Presidio of San Francisco, [Stella Maris Academy](#) is a Catholic classical school that serves students from preschool through eighth grade. It is the first classical Catholic school in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, established in 2021. Located at Star of the Sea Parish, the campus has a long history of Catholic education in the city, providing K-8 education for over 115 years. Stella Maris Academy aims to integrate classical education principles centered on truth, beauty, and goodness within a Catholic framework. This approach is designed to nurture students both academically and spiritually, promoting rigorous critical thinking alongside moral and spiritual formation.

The school offers a robust [curriculum](#) that emphasizes liberal arts education, with subjects such as literature, history, mathematics, and the arts interwoven with Catholic teachings. Stella Maris encourages students to develop a deep understanding of the world through a faith-based lens, aiming to form well-rounded individuals who are both intellectually and morally equipped for life. The classical education model has shown promising results, with students achieving high performance on standardized tests while engaging deeply with Catholic traditions.

Stella Maris Academy, opened at the request of Archbishop Cordileone, is known for fostering a strong sense of community among students, families, and staff, making it more than just an educational institution. It is a place where families and faculty work together to support the holistic development of children, grounded in the values of the Catholic faith. An accomplished and involved advisory school board includes senior executives and software engineers at Meta and Google as well as experienced lawyers and educators. This model of education has been praised for its potential to reinvigorate Catholic education in the region, with hopes for future expansion of classical academies in the archdiocese. The success of Stella Maris Academy motivated a group of parents to establish a classical Catholic high school on the school campus, which began with a ninth grade in 2024 and plans to add a higher grade each year.

Stella Maris Academy is now embarking on a national search for its next Head of School, who will begin his or her service in July 2025. This individual will be tasked with leading the school through its next chapter of growth and success as a pre-eminent Catholic classical community of faith and learning. The ideal candidate will be a visionary leader with a deep commitment to Catholic education and the classical liberal arts teaching method.

THE POSITION

The ideal Head of School will be someone who loves the fullness of the Catholic faith, and lives it in his/her life through practice of the moral, intellectual, and theological virtues. As the leader, the Head of School will demonstrate in all actions a firm willingness to be individually responsible for the overall operation of the school, and a joyful acceptance of accountability for that responsibility.

Organizational Management

The Head of School will own the responsibility for the management and operations of the entire school. The Head of School will also, with an entrepreneurial and creative spirit, make decisions quickly and creatively to maintain the school's attainment of its mission, both in the short and long-term.

The Head of School will:

- Lead the school in maintaining good relations with the school families, personnel, constituents, and community contacts of the school. Help those families and friends understand the vision and mission of the school.
- Administer the school in conformity with Archdiocesan policies and in accordance with the laws of the state, provided those laws do not violate Catholic teaching upon which the school is founded. Understand that parents are the primary educators of their children, and that the school is acting to support parents in their vocations.
- Identify necessary operations which do not yet exist, set up such operations, or hire, delegate, and manage someone else who will do so.
- Delegate all responsibilities he/she cannot personally execute on.



FAST FACTS



PERPETUAL ADORATION
AVAILABLE FOR
STUDENTS



1

weekly Mass



MUSIC PROGRAM
PARTNERSHIP WITH
ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL
CHOIR SCHOOL



- Collect and compile all necessary data and perform any studies, including accreditation, that may be required of the school. Lead the staff through early years of growth by providing good change management and communication to bring the staff, faculty, and families through necessary changes.
- Develop a realistic annual budget, and plan an operating plan and its related details accordingly.
- Assist in the continued development and execution of Stella Maris's strategic plan.
- Develop, execute and achieve targets for Stella Maris's enrollment, marketing, and fundraising.
- Obtain and maintain school accreditation status.
- Maintain current physical plant and provide input and execution for new physical plant as needed.

Personnel Administration

The Head of School is responsible for the overall spiritual, personal, and professional growth and leadership of the school's faculty and staff. The Head of School leads in the area of personnel relations to maximize the educational benefits for each student.

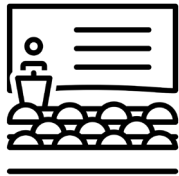
The Head of School will:

- Create a vibrant, mission-focused culture and environment of friendship among the Stella Maris faculty, staff, students and families.
- Lead, manage, and hold accountable the staff and faculty as they carry out all of the operations of the school.

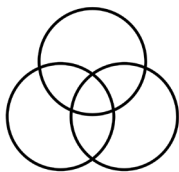
FAST FACTS



VIBRANT COMMUNITY
PARISH WITH DAILY
CONFESSION & PERPETUAL
EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION



MIDDLE SCHOOL
ADVANCED COURSE
OFFERINGS WITH
NEIGHBORING NATIVITY
HIGH SCHOOL



CLASSICAL CURRICULAR
MODEL

- Develop the school staffing plan and execute accordingly.
- Manage all teams he/she has delegated to effectively.
- Hold faculty, staff, and students accountable.
- Plan and oversee staff meetings and faculty prayer times.
- Conduct appropriate administrative, faculty, or staff meetings as necessary.
- Direct and approve the practices and procedures of teacher in-service training, conference and seminar participation, and continuing education, especially those which have direct impact on the application of the classical teaching methods used within the school.
- Administer all other personnel policies in such areas as salary, placement, leave, fringe benefits, and grievance procedures.
- Communicate the overall strategic vision to faculty and staff and ensure they understand it.
- Resolve problems which may arise between parents and teachers, teachers and students, or staff members, applying virtue-based principles of problem solving.
- Maintain and keep current all personnel files and records for the school.
- Liaise with Star of the Sea's pastor on a regular basis.

Curriculum and Instruction

The Head of School is the instructional leader, where the Head serves the teachers so that they can spend their time serving the students. The Head of School leads in developing, achieving, and maintaining the strongest possible educational programs and services which promote the goals and objectives of the school.



The Head of School will:

- Create a culture of responsibility, joyful accountability, and productive feedback.
- Direct a program of evaluation through frequent classroom visitation, lesson observation, and self-evaluation of teaching methods, curriculum content, and class- room management.
- Thoroughly understand the Catholic and classical model of teaching
- Lead in curriculum development and staff and faculty recruitment, along with the academic dean.
- Form and oversee the academic departments or special committees of the faculty in the development of the instructional program.
- Oversee the scheduling of all teachers and students into appropriate courses or classrooms.
- Assist teaching as needed

Student Body & Families

The Head of School supervises the welfare of the student body and its individual students in their spiritual and academic growth, the quality of their learning program, and their physical well-being.





The Head of School will:

- Review and approve curricular plans as submitted by teachers, including the goals and objectives of each grade or course.
- Hold teachers accountable for implementing policies for student discipline
- Administer strict student disciplinary measures when necessary and proper, such as probation, suspension, or expulsion.
- Ensure a school-wide program of student evaluation, including achievement testing, and ensure that proper record keeping, and reporting procedures are followed by teachers and staff.
- Oversee cumulative records for each student in accordance with the policies
- Develop and oversee extracurricular activities and the personnel who supervise them.
- Communicate with families, through parents committee or other

QUALIFICATIONS

- Practicing Roman Catholic in full communion with the Church
- Masters or Doctorate degree
- A demonstrable and deep understanding of classical education, Stella Maris's mission, and its culture (mission/culture fit)
- 5+ years of experience in leadership at a school or other educational setting
- Teaching experience
- Commitment to pledge fidelity to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church
- Experience serving on and managing boards
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong commitment to and experience in developing staff and faculty

- Leadership experience in a startup environment
- Proven ability to communicate frequently, clearly, and with various audiences
- Growth mindset – willingness to own mistakes and eagerness to receive feedback.
- Strong relationship-building skills

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Stella Maris Academy is uniquely positioned for growth and excellence, where with the right leader it can take advantage of a unique combination of untapped potential and unmet needs in the city of San Francisco. Stella Maris Academy exists at the intersection of this untapped potential and these unmet needs, and therefore has the prospect of growing into one of the finest Catholic classical schools in the United States.

The next Head of School must work closely with faculty members on their own professional growth and development and ensure standards of the classical curriculum and pedagogy are met.

With a young school, there is a unique opportunity to be an architect of new school traditions and marketing the model in the local, regional, and national Catholic educational landscapes.

The next Head of School must work closely with the Pastor on advancement-related goals and needs as the school continues to grow.





ABOUT THE AREA

San Francisco, often dubbed “The City by the Bay,” is a vibrant and iconic metropolis and is the fifth-most visited city in the United States. Known for its stunning natural beauty, the city offers a diverse range of experiences for residents and visitors alike. With its mild climate, the city provides the perfect backdrop for outdoor activities, from hiking in the nearby redwood forests to picnicking in one of its many parks. The campus itself is in the city, just five minutes from the Golden Gate Bridge and three blocks from two major parks—Golden Gate Park and the Presidio—where the city’s major art and science museums are located. The iconic Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz Island, and the bustling Fisherman’s Wharf are just a few of the renowned landmarks that make San Francisco a special destination.

San Francisco’s rich culture and innovation are also noteworthy. As a global tech hub, the area is home to Silicon Valley, the birthplace of many cutting-edge technological advancements. The city’s cultural diversity is reflected in its thriving arts and food scenes, with numerous world-class museums, restaurants, and a diverse population that contributes to its unique character. With a population of around 800,000 residents and a global reputation for progressiveness, San Francisco is a captivating city that continues to evolve and inspire, making it a place where dreams and innovation thrive.

The city’s significant Catholic heritage also beautifully enriches the area’s cultural tapestry. The Catholic community in the area has a rich history dating back to the Spanish colonial era when Catholic missions were first established in California. The iconic Mission San Francisco de Asís, also known as Mission Dolores, is a historic Catholic church built in honor of Saint Francis and from which the city took its name.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

To apply, please submit the following four documents, confidentially, and as separate PDF attachments.

- Cover letter that aligns your experiences and skill sets with the current needs of Stella Maris Academy as you understand them
- Statement of Catholic educational philosophy
- Current resume with all appropriate dates included
- List of five references to include names, relationships, phone numbers, and email addresses (No references will be contacted without your knowledge and approval.)
- Please include “Stella Maris Academy” in the subject field.



Assemble all of the application materials in one email to:

Kyle Pietrantonio, Partner
kpietrantonio@partnersinmission.com
202-390-0230
www.partnersinmissionslss.com



partnersinmissionslss.com