

**ST. MARY'S**  
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

# Head of School Search

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL | MEMPHIS, TN  
JULY 2027







## Overview

St. Mary's Episcopal School is a college-preparatory school for girls from 2-year-old through 12th grade. Founded in 1847, St. Mary's consistently ranks as among the top schools in Memphis and the state. Recent Niche rankings placed St. Mary's as the #1 Girls' School, #1 Christian School, and #2 High School for STEM in Tennessee.

North Campus includes four main buildings: the Marlene R. Shaw Early Childhood Center; Moss Hall, home to Liza's Library, a makerspace, a nursery for faculty infants, and administrative offices; two classroom buildings serving grades 1-5; as well as a gymnasium and the Barksdale Athletic Field.

South Campus, just across Walnut Grove Road, houses Middle and Upper School classrooms, the Buckman Center for the Arts, the Athletic and Wellness Center, administrative offices, and the Church of the Holy Communion.

Students enjoy exceptional facilities, including makerspaces, playgrounds, renovated science labs, a performing arts center, and top-tier athletic resources with turf fields, track, gyms, and a strength and conditioning center.

## Mission Statement

*St. Mary's Episcopal School provides an unparalleled educational experience that challenges and supports each girl as she discovers her unique purpose and reaches her individual potential.*

## Community Values

### Academic Excellence

We encourage intellectual curiosity and spark a lifelong love of learning.

### Belonging

We foster an inclusive community that values the uniqueness of each person.

### Honor

We hold ourselves and each other accountable to act with strong moral and ethical character.

### Episcopal Identity

We are guided by God's love to support spiritual growth and to be knowledgeable and respectful of each other's beliefs.

### Courage

We cultivate the confidence to take risks and persevere.







## Episcopal Identity

As an Episcopal school, St. Mary's is grounded in the traditions and teachings of the Episcopal Church. Regular Chapel services provide inspiration and connection, offering timeless wisdom in a modern context. Middle and Upper School students attend chapel daily, while Early Childhood and Lower School students attend once a week. The school welcomes students of all religious, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, nurturing a vibrant and diverse community. Moral and ethical development is cultivated through Chapel, curriculum, and the Bridge to Caring traits: respect, responsibility, thankfulness, kindness, self-control, honesty, courage, and cooperation.

Service is central to the mission at St. Mary's. Beginning in Lower School, students learn to live out their faith through age-appropriate service projects that benefit local nonprofits and build empathy through hands-on experiences and reflection. In Middle School, seventh graders participate in Community Connections, a course developed in partnership with MIFA (Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association), where students explore local challenges such as homelessness and food insecurity while engaging in volunteer work and donation drives. Upper School students may take on leadership roles through the Wilson Society, designing and implementing service projects funded by grants from the Wilson Family Foundation, or through the St. Mary's Community Fund, a student-run organization that has granted more than \$750,000 to over 50 local agencies benefiting Mid-South children. Service is further recognized through the Century Award, honoring seniors who complete 100 or more hours of community service annually, reinforcing St. Mary's commitment to compassion, leadership, and civic responsibility.



## Academics

St. Mary's is rooted in the belief that personal connection is the most powerful teaching tool. Each girl benefits from a deeply personalized learning experience shaped by dedicated faculty who understand how she learns and what motivates her. Faculty at St. Mary's are experts in girls' education, drawing on research-based methods to inspire critical and creative thinking. Many serve in national leadership roles or are published authors, artists, and professionals. Their commitment to lifelong learning ensures that instruction remains innovative and engaging.

### Early Childhood (Two-Year-Olds – Senior Kindergarten)

In a Reggio Emilia-inspired environment, our classrooms are intentionally designed to foster curiosity and wonder through hands-on, project-based learning. Guided by two experienced lead teachers in every classroom, along with support from an Early Childhood Learning Specialist and special subject teachers, girls receive individualized instruction in foundational literacy, language development, and early math. St. Mary's offers the most flexible Early Childhood scheduling options in Memphis as well as extended care through the After3 program until 5:30 p.m.

### Lower School (Grades 1-5)

Lower School nurtures confidence and character in a supportive environment where students are encouraged to explore, question, and grow. A robust academic program is enriched through hands-on learning, creative problem-solving, technology integration, and collaborative experiences across core subjects, the arts, STEM, world languages, and athletics. Weekly chapel, service-learning experiences, and the Bridge to Caring character program support holistic development and cultivate capable, confident, and compassionate learners.





## Academics

### Middle School (Grades 6–8)

The curriculum emphasizes essential skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, and communication. Students learn study strategies, time management, self-advocacy, and independence. With balanced support and autonomy, girls grow into responsible, confident learners prepared for upper school.

### Upper School (Grades 9–12)

Upper School students engage in a challenging college-preparatory program enriched by real-world experiences. With a customized course of study, students pursue core requirements alongside diverse electives and co-curricular opportunities. Whether on stage, in the lab, on the field, or in Chapel, students discover their passions and develop as scholars and leaders. St. Mary's is a charter member of One Schoolhouse, expanding academic opportunities with advanced coursework in a dynamic digital community.





## Athletics

St. Mary's believes athletics are essential to developing confident, well-rounded young women. Athletic facilities are excellent with a state of the art strength and conditioning center, multiple gymnasiums, artificial turf playing field, athletic training facilities, and attractive locker rooms.

- **Lower School focuses** on skill development and exploration.
- **Middle School builds** fundamentals and introduces increased competition and sportsmanship.
- **Upper School provides** a culminating experience for highly committed, skilled athletes.

Facilities include a new Athletic and Wellness Center, a stadium-size gymnasium, a track and turf field, and a Lower School gym.

- **Upper School:** 11 sports, 18 teams
- **Middle School:** 9 sports, 18 teams
- **Student participation:** 75% compete in at least one sport

St. Mary's competes in the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association.

The mascot—**the Turkey**—is proudly unique and famously reached the finals of the USA Today Best High School Mascot competition.



## The Arts

Creative exploration is a hallmark of a St. Mary's education, with students engaging in visual arts, music, dance, and theater to express themselves, develop technique, and build confidence. Art is offered as a special subject through eighth grade, with increasingly specialized coursework available in Middle and Upper School. In Lower School, students explore movement and music; in Middle School, they choose between instrumental or vocal performance; and in Upper School, they expand their skills through electives such as Concert Choir, Chamber Ensemble, and Wind Ensemble. Theater is a vibrant part of the St. Mary's experience, with four major productions each year. The Louise T. Archer Artist in Residence program offers students an opportunity to engage with nationally renowned artists. The Buckman Performing and Fine Arts Center provides opportunities for students to work with nationally and internationally renowned artists in a state-of-the-art setting, deepening their artistic skills and connection to the arts.

## Global Education Program

The Global Education Program invites every girl to explore the world through developmentally appropriate, vertically aligned experiences. Students investigate international and domestic issues through coursework, co-curricular activities, guest speakers, book clubs, and immersive travel opportunities. The Upper School Global Scholars program offers a specialized pathway for students passionate about global issues, combining focused coursework, service, and a capstone project, with graduates earning a Global Scholars certificate. Middle and Upper School students have the opportunity to embark on immersive travel experiences led by faculty members.





## Belonging Statement

St. Mary's Episcopal School is committed to creating, maintaining, and nurturing a diverse and inclusive educational environment. Students, families, alumnae, faculty, and staff from varied backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences participate in the courageous and ongoing work of understanding and respecting one another. This diversity enriches the educational experience and supports the development of respect, responsibility, empathy, and unity.

At St. Mary's, belonging is nurtured through intentional spaces such as affinity groups, Chapel programming, and student-led fireside chats. Students connect through shared experiences, engage diverse perspectives, and feel seen, valued, and supported as part of a community grounded in the Episcopal call to belonging. A full-time Director of Belonging oversees belonging programming.

## Fast Facts

**Founded:** 1847

**Genders:** All girls

**Ages:** Two-year-olds through Grade 12

**Enrollment:** 785

**Faculty/Staff:** 175 (70% with advanced degrees)

**Student-Teacher Ratio:** 8:1

**Campuses:**

**North Campus:** Early Childhood – Grade 5

**South Campus:** Grades 6–12; adjacent to Church of the Holy Communion

**School Colors:** blue and white

**Mascot:** Turkey

**Tuition:** \$20,750–\$27,800 (Senior Kindergarten – Grade 12)

**Financial Aid:** 20% of students; average award \$10,000; \$1.9 million total awarded

**Endowment:** Approx. \$24.5

**Annual Operating Budget:** \$22M

**Debt:** No debt



## Memberships & Affiliations:

National Association of Independent Schools

National Association of Episcopal Schools

Southern Association of Independent Schools

Tennessee Association of Independent Schools

## Learn More

[Strategic Plan](#)

[Portrait of a Graduate](#)

[Signature Programs](#)







## The Position

The next Head of School at St. Mary's will join a thriving institution supported by a dedicated and experienced administrative team. Senior leadership includes an Associate Head, four Division Heads, a CFO, the Chaplain, and numerous Directors.

St. Mary's has enjoyed strong and stable leadership for more than twenty years. Albert Throckmorton, who will conclude fifteen years as Head in 2027, previously served eight years as Assistant Head. His predecessor served for nine years.

Governance is provided by a 26-member Board of Trustees composed of alumnae, current and past parents, and community leaders. The Episcopal Bishop of West Tennessee and the Rector of the Church of the Holy Communion serve as ex officio, voting members.

St. Mary's is guided by a five-year Strategic Plan, released in 2025, which focuses on Institutional Excellence, Living Our Episcopal Identity, and Financial Strength. A link to the plan is provided on the previous page.

Continuing to foster and strengthen our relationship with the Church of the Holy Communion remains a clear priority for the School. We share a deeply collaborative and positive partnership, grounded in mutual respect, shared values, and a long-standing commitment to one another's success. Members of the Church serve on the School's Board of Trustees, and the Rector and Head of School maintain a strong, supportive, and collegial relationship. The school cherishes its inclusive environment and warmly welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds.

The School is in a strong position and has many beloved traditions. The next Head of School needs to recognize the strengths of the School and value the long-standing traditions while casting a discerning eye to ways to move St. Mary's forward.

**Responsibilities begin July 1, 2027.**



## Opportunities & Challenges

The next Head of School will inherit many strengths, including:

- An unwavering commitment to girls' education
- A debt-free financial position
- Newly constructed or recently renovated campus facilities
- A strong sense of community, affirmed by students and faculty and reflected in low student attrition rates
- Rigorous academics that prepare girls for college and life

## Priorities

The next Head of School will need to focus on:

- Upholding the school's standards of excellence
- Recruiting and retaining exceptional faculty and staff
- Increasing enrollment and strengthening retention
- Honoring and living out the school's mission and core values
- Remaining competitive within the independent school landscape
- Continuing to foster and strengthen the relationship with the Church of the Holy Communion





## Qualities & Qualifications

### Professional Qualifications

The successful candidate will possess:

- a commitment to fostering girls' leadership and confidence
- the ability to promote and represent the school effectively
- delegation and team-building skills
- skill in recruiting, supporting, and retaining excellent faculty
- strategic, long-range planning abilities
- independent school administrative experience
- fundraising ability

### Personal Qualities

The warm, close-knit community at St. Mary's seeks a leader who possesses:

- a passion for education
- strong communication skills
- the ability to inspire those around him/her
- ease in making fair and firm decisions
- the ability to bring people together for a common purpose
- openness to diverse views and new ideas



## Living in Memphis

St. Mary's is located in East Memphis, an area known for its welcoming neighborhoods and proximity to cultural and recreational amenities.

Memphis offers a distinctive blend of Southern charm, deep cultural roots, and modern energy. The city's identity is shaped by its Mississippi River setting, vibrant arts scene, and rich musical heritage—home to the blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll. Landmarks such as Beale Street, Sun Studio, and the Stax Museum celebrate this legacy, while festivals like Memphis in May bring the community together.

Memphis is one of the most philanthropic cities in the United States; one survey ranked Memphis number one. The average Memphian donates 5.6 percent of their overall income to charitable causes. Memphis is home to nationally known St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital and excellent health care including the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Memphis is also home to several colleges including Rhodes College and the University of Memphis.

With a lower cost of living than most major U.S. cities, Memphis is appealing to families and professionals. Neighborhoods such as Cooper-Young, Central Gardens, and Harbor Town offer unique atmospheres, from eclectic and artsy to historic and serene. The dining scene spans famous barbecue to innovative global cuisine.

Outdoor offerings abound: Shelby Farms Park, the Mississippi Riverfront, and Overton Park provide miles of trails, lakes, and green spaces. Sports fans enjoy the Memphis Grizzlies, the Redbirds, and a strong college basketball culture.





## How to Apply

Prospective candidates should submit the following materials in a single PDF to the search consultants:

- Letter of interest addressing this position and the school
- Résumé (education and work history)
- Statement of educational leadership philosophy
- List of five professional references with contact information

## Search Consultants



**KATHERINE MONCURE STUART**  
PRESIDENT, TEG

[katherine@educationgroup.com](mailto:katherine@educationgroup.com)



**DAVE DAVIES**  
SEARCH CONSULTANT

[dave@educationgroup.com](mailto:dave@educationgroup.com)