



ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL SCHOOL
Houston, Texas

UPPER SCHOOL HEAD
Start Date: July 1, 2021
stfrancishouston.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES



Mission

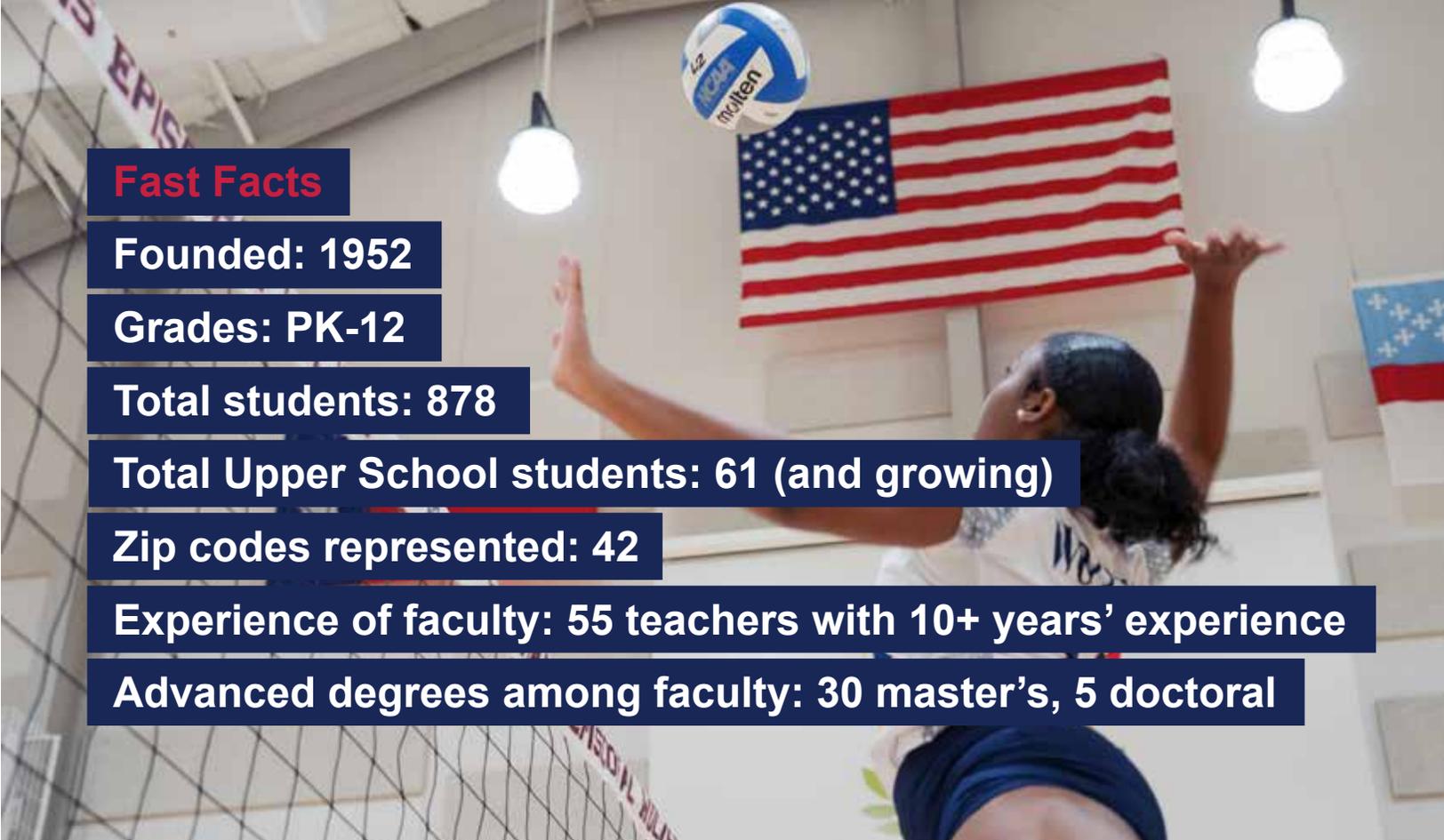
In the Anglican tradition, St. Francis Episcopal School challenges and motivates students in an academically and spiritually stimulating environment to become imaginative, critical thinkers and people for others.

OVERVIEW

St. Francis Episcopal School in Houston is a primary through high school coeducational day school known for its supportive culture and intellectually rich, forward-thinking program. Serving 878 students of all backgrounds, the school offers an innovative curriculum and a faith-based program designed to help its students develop a strong sense of identity, the skills for college and life, and a commitment to the greater good. From its Reggio-inspired approach in Primary School to the student-centered STEAM and design-thinking programs in the Upper School, the school ensures that all students are deeply engaged in their learning.

Through a well-orchestrated plan, St. Francis Episcopal School has been growing recently from a Pre-Primary through grade eight into a Pre-Primary through grade twelve school — adding a grade level to the Upper School each year since it opened in 2018. The 2021–22 school year will mark the first year with a twelfth grade. As the youngest division, the Upper School has been thoughtfully developed as a leading-edge program based on both the school's mission and the growing body of knowledge and research in the science of learning.

St. Francis Episcopal School seeks an Upper School Head starting July 1, 2021. The successful candidate will be an experienced educational leader who personifies both the school's mission and its commitment to delivering an innovative program and student experience. This is an exceptional opportunity to help shape and lead a new and growing division in a highly regarded independent school with an unwavering commitment to student success.



Fast Facts

Founded: 1952

Grades: PK-12

Total students: 878

Total Upper School students: 61 (and growing)

Zip codes represented: 42

Experience of faculty: 55 teachers with 10+ years' experience

Advanced degrees among faculty: 30 master's, 5 doctoral

SCHOOL HISTORY

From a single preschool class in 1952, St. Francis Episcopal School gradually expanded into a full elementary school. By 1973, St. Francis included classes through sixth grade. Between 1978 and 1985, capital campaigns funded the construction of a gymnasium, dining hall, additional classrooms, and the Sarah W. Woolrich Education Building. In 1997, the school added an Outdoor Activity Center and in 2001 opened a new Lower School Building, library, a 600-seat Fine Arts Center, and technology center, along with a renovated dining hall, gymnasium, and common area. The Woods Outdoor Classroom was established in 2011.

With the Pre-K–8 school fully developed; St. Francis began expanding again in 2017 — this time to establish a forward-thinking Upper School division. Since 2018, the school has added a high-school grade each year. In 2021–22, the Upper School will serve ninth through twelfth grade.

THE SCHOOL

St. Francis Episcopal School is the parish school of St. Francis Episcopal Church in Houston, TX. Located on two campuses within a mile of each other, the school currently educates 878 boys and girls from Pre-Primary through eleventh grade. In 2021–22, the school will also include twelfth grade — with the entire Upper School housed in a combination of buildings on the 23-acre Couper Campus.

Guided by the school's four cornerstones — "Faith, Dignity, Courage, Scholarship" — students advance through critical stages in the development of language, social skills, and problem-solving capabilities. They build study habits, self-discipline, and strengths in abstract thinking, while internalizing values that will help them grow into poised, confident leaders.



The recently approved 2025 Strategic Plan is designed to strengthen the overall St. Francis experience and focuses on six different initiatives. With a focus on evaluating and improving programs; devoting resources to recruiting and hiring highly talented faculty; emphasizing student’s social and emotional wellness; working to diversify the community; and partnering with parents in their children’s academic journey. A major element of the plan is the completion of the expansion into a Pre-Primary–12 school. To that end, St. Francis School is currently constructing state-of-the-art Upper School facilities to house up to 200 students.

The Upper School learning environment combines intensive, interdisciplinary coursework with increasing autonomy to create a college-like experience, empowering students to hone their particular talents and interests while continuing to explore new possibilities — academic, personal, and spiritual. The cutting-edge program is intentionally structured to link the academic, social, and spiritual experiences of each student. Through interdisciplinary learning and design thinking, ninth and tenth graders shape their learning and leadership experiences in preparation for further study in grades 11-12. Overall, a St. Francis Upper School education fosters intellectual curiosity, a deep affinity for others, and a desire to gain an understanding beyond the students’ lived experience.

St. Francis Episcopal School is accredited by and a member of the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest and the Southwest Association of Episcopal Schools.

UPPER SCHOOL ACADEMICS

The Upper School curriculum is based on scientific inquiry and reasoning partnered with communication, empathy, and leadership. In the classroom, St. Francis students enjoy a rigorous course of study taught by distinguished faculty who focus on experiential learning, mastery of skills, and character development in a faith-based setting.



The Upper School believes that the best learning comes through connecting experiences. To that end, the interdisciplinary curriculum links subjects, people, and concepts while promoting collaboration. The program is also dedicated to the study of depth over breadth, emphasizing the students' passions and a focus on real-world applications. To the latter end, thematic topics are used as touchstones between subjects, the school community, and the world beyond the campus. For example, the humanities merge with the sciences and Houston becomes the greater classroom. A heightened focus on writing, analytical reasoning, and innovative problem-solving provides Upper School students with essential instruction in the skills of lifelong learning.

The Upper School signature programs include entrepreneurship, internships, and two-week intensives that provide practical and real-world experience. High-level instruction in coding, computer logic, and 3-D technology — plus a hands-on “maker space” — offers opportunities in engineering and computer science. In the entrepreneurship program, students work in teams to solve real-world challenges.

By graduation, a St. Francis education will foster an intense intellectual curiosity, connected and experiential learning, a deep affinity for others, and a desire to gain an understanding beyond the student's own lived experience. St. Francis offers a comprehensive college counseling program to guide students in their post-graduation endeavors. As early as freshman year, students begin working with the Department of College Counseling to build self-awareness and develop the research skills needed to make choices that will benefit them well beyond their high school years.



ARTS AND ATHLETICS

St. Francis Upper School's well-developed art, music, and drama programs stimulate creative thinking, promote self-confidence, and enhance leadership skills and academic performance. Collectively, this right-brained activity also helps students develop overall discipline, perseverance, and commitment.

The fine arts program includes a variety of courses as well as a range of theatrical and musical opportunities.

Upper School athletics began in the fall of 2018 with the Founding Freshman class. In the first three years, students have competed in the following sports: girls volleyball, co-ed cross country, boys and girls Basketball, co-ed swimming, co-ed track and field, and co-ed golf. Seventy-three percent of Upper School students currently participate in at least one sport per year. As the Upper School grows into its capacity, the School anticipates establishing a full interscholastic sports program similar to the current Middle School program.

STUDENT LIFE

As founding members of the Upper School, students lead in many facets of campus life. They help create and direct student government and student life activities, including clubs, sports, and fine arts organizations.

As people for others, students in all divisions have worked together to collect food, toys, and coats for families in need; hand-deliver school supplies to students in Costa Rica; raise funds for eye exams for disadvantaged children; create pottery bowls to benefit the Houston Food Bank; tie-dye pillow cases for



patients at Texas Children’s Hospital; and even raise and donate more than \$35,000 to local nonprofit organizations.

Separately, the St. Francis Travel Program offers Middle and Upper School students the opportunity to broaden their horizons through carefully curated learning adventures.

At the heart of every student-life effort is the goal of cultivating an awareness of human needs and differences, developing in each student a moral sense of “giving back,” encouraging a personal pattern of service, and fostering a belief that change for the better is possible through individual and group efforts.

CAMPUS

St. Francis Episcopal School is located on two sites totaling 39 wooded acres in Houston’s Memorial area. The 16-acre Piney Point Campus, serves students in grades K-8, and features meticulously groomed regulation playing fields, a state-of-the-art Fine Arts Center, a certified Nature Explore outdoor classroom, a gymnasium and a covered outdoor activities center, and a library totaling more than 7,000 square feet.

The gorgeous 23-acre Couper Campus is located just a mile from the Piney Point Campus, and houses the Primary School in three cottages, athletics fields, the Crum Athletics Center, and all Upper School facilities. A new student-life building is currently under construction. This state-of-the-art, 27,000-square-foot facility will accommodate the growing Upper School. With the other facilities on campus, the Upper School will have the ability to serve 200 students.



HOUSTON, TEXAS

With an estimated population of 2.3 million people, Houston is the most populous city in Texas and the fourth largest in the United States. Located near Galveston Bay, Houston is a highly diverse city with a large and growing international community. The Rice University Kinder Institute for Urban Research has described Greater Houston as “one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse metropolitan areas in the country.” The city also has a growing international community.

For those considering relocating to Houston, Houston ranks high among the most affordable major cities in the U.S. The city has also landed on several “best of” lists, including the Travel + Leisure roundup of America’s Favorite Cities. Topping the list of its attractive qualities is its vibrant culture. Along with offering remarkable and varied dining experiences, Houston is home to some exceptional performing arts institutions, including the Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony Orchestra, and the highly regarded Alley Theatre. In the visual arts, the city is home to The Museum of Fine Arts and the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston. The city is also home to some top professional sports teams, including the Astros (baseball), Rockets (basketball), and Texans (football).

Houston is known worldwide for its energy industry and its biomedical research and aeronautics. Renewable energy sources — wind and solar — are also growing economic bases as the city adapts to the needs of the 21st century. All in all, Houston is a vibrant, forward-looking city.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

St. Francis Episcopal seeks a creative, collaborative, and dedicated Upper School Head to lead the faculty and staff forward as the Upper School continues to develop and grow.

The Upper School Head is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Upper School Division, serves on the Executive Leadership Team, and reports directly to the Head of School. The new Upper School Head has the opportunity to lead a talented and dedicated faculty, one which has embraced new innovations in teaching and learning.

Along with the Head of School, the Upper School Head carries out the process of teacher supervision, evaluation, and professional development, including the evaluation and support of Curriculum and Instruction Coordinators. Additionally, the Upper School Head will strive to work collaboratively with the Middle and Lower School Divisions, which are housed on a different campus.

The successful candidate will have the energy, experience and determination to work collaboratively but decisively with faculty and students — to continue to build a healthy, warm, friendly, diverse, academic and extracurricular culture where each student is respected for who they are and in which rigor is truly enhanced by balance and wellbeing. Also, the successful candidate will need to be an entrepreneur at heart, ready and willing to implement new initiatives as the school grows.



DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Proven leadership experience.
- Willingness to be an entrepreneurial leader, and some proven experience as such.
- A love for teaching.
- Collaborative spirit.
- Strong recruiter of faculty.
- Infectious sense of humor.
- Excellent ability as a relationship builder.
- Ability to be a visible leader in the community.

TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing interest in this position;
- A current résumé;
- A one-page statement of educational and leadership philosophy;
- A list of five references, including name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will be contacted only with the candidate's permission) to:

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