



ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS
Dallas, Texas

Head of Lower School

Introduction

St. Mark's School of Texas is a nonsectarian, college preparatory, independent day school enrolling approximately 860 boys in grades one through twelve. Its 40-acre campus, located in a picturesque, residential neighborhood of Dallas, Texas, includes 16 buildings and state-of-the-art athletic facilities. Founded in 1906 as the Terrill School for Boys, St. Mark's builds upon a rich heritage of academic excellence by fostering students' physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth. In order to prepare young men for lives of responsibility and leadership in a competitive and ever-changing world, the school promotes six key values: integrity, confidence, judgment, passion and curiosity, spirituality and ethics, and balance. Throughout their time at the school, boys learn responsibility for their actions, the benefit of deferring gratification in pursuit of goals, and the importance of working with others to make a positive difference on campus and in their community.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

St. Mark's aims to prepare young men to assume leadership and responsibility in a competitive and changing world. To this end, the School professes and upholds certain values. These values include the discipline of postponing immediate gratification in the interest of earning eventual, hard-won satisfaction; the responsibility of defending one's own ideas, of respecting the views of others, and of accepting the consequences for one's own actions; and an appreciation for the lively connection between knowledge and responsibility and the obligation to serve.

St. Mark's believes that the focus of teaching and learning should be the total development of each student. Teachers instill an enthusiasm for learning, encourage independent and critical judgment, and demonstrate the methods for making sound inquiries and for effective communication. Whether in or out of the classroom, all activities aim at motivating students to realize their potential, and the school rewards both striving and achieving. Of the 125 full-time

outstanding and dedicated faculty members, 71 percent hold advanced degrees, including nine who have earned their doctorates. A student-faculty ratio of 8:1 allows teachers to work closely with students and differentiate instruction to meet various learning needs.

St. Mark's graduates attend some of the finest institutions of higher education in the world. "Marksmen" from the class of 2016 have matriculated at Stanford, Harvard, Vanderbilt, the University of Texas at Austin, Duke, Georgetown, the University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth, Princeton, Georgetown, and Columbia among others. Representatives from nearly 200 colleges and universities visit the campus every year to meet with the boys and provide information about their schools.

The Lower School

The Lower School, which has 150 students in grades one through four, provides a strong foundation for boys' intellectual and personal growth. Caring teachers help develop academic competencies, character, ethical leadership, compassion for others, and a healthy sense of competition in a warm and nurturing environment. Each week, boys have classes in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, computer skills, Spanish, art, drama, music, and library. An overview of the Lower School academic program may be found [here](#).

Daily activities outside the classroom consist of two recesses, lunch, and physical education. Twice each week students attend a nonsectarian chapel service, which provides an introduction to many world religions and faith traditions as well as a time for quiet personal reflection.

Throughout the early years at St. Mark's, life skills and study skills are integrated seamlessly with academics through a variety of experiences that build and strengthen both character and intellect. Boys learn to develop and maintain concentration, to work independently and as a member of a group, to be tenacious when confronted with difficulty, and to learn from their mistakes and celebrate their successes. Faculty, staff, and administrators work together to provide opportunities for growth on a number of levels and have a strong commitment to shepherding boys through the process of becoming young men of character.

The Lower School experience is further enhanced by the sense of community among all constituents. Students, teachers, staff, and parents are brought together by traditions such as Blue & Gold Day, the annual field day; Adventure Day, when students meet their peers at sister school Hockaday; and Banner Chapel, a special chapel service during which students hang

St. Mark's At a Glance

Founded: 1906

2015-16 Enrollment

Grades 1-12: 860

Lower School: 150

Students of Color: 45%

Campus: 44 acres in Dallas, Texas

Lower School Faculty: 17

Student-to-Teacher Ratio: 8:1

Lower School Tuition:

\$23,589 - \$23,930

Financial Aid: \$2.1 million to 17%
of student body

Budget: \$30.5 million

Endowment: \$120 million

Annual Giving: \$3.7 million

banners they have created that celebrate their faith. In addition, the Upper School Buddy program pairs first, second, and third graders with seniors for special events throughout the year, including one of the school's most cherished customs, the All-School Christmas Party at which seniors carry their buddies on their shoulders into the Great Hall to decorate the school Christmas Tree.

The Opportunity

Barbara York, St. Mark's Head of Lower School since 1994, retired in June 2016, and a former faculty member is serving as Interim Head of Lower School for the 2016-2017 academic year. The school seeks a new Head of Lower School who embodies the values of the institution and will contribute to its overall leadership by supporting and serving a committed and experienced faculty and working closely with all school community members to improve what is recognized throughout the nation as an academically excellent program.

The new Head of Lower School will join St. Mark's at an exciting time. David Dini, who served as the school's Assistant Headmaster since 1994, was appointed Headmaster in 2014, and John Ashton, who previously worked in a variety of teaching and administrative capacities at St. Mark's, recently returned to the school in the newly created Associate Headmaster position. These transitions have brought additional shifts in administrative functions, including increased involvement from department chairs in supporting schoolwide curricula and increased autonomy and responsibility for Heads of Lower, Middle, and Upper School with respect to both day-to-day decision making and strategic direction and outcomes. The sense of collaboration, trust, and collegiality among the school's senior administrators has only grown stronger with the integration of these subtle but important changes.

Responsibilities

The new Head of Lower School will report directly to the Headmaster and will be responsible for the continued academic, programmatic, administrative, and cultural health of the division. In addition to overseeing daily operations of the Lower School, this individual will provide the strategic vision and leadership necessary to create and sustain a nurturing and supportive environment that values both tradition and innovation while also identifying future opportunities for growth and enhancement of existing programs. Direct reports currently include two Phase Leaders, the Lower School faculty, and an administrative assistant. Specific duties will include the following:

- Serving as a member of the Headmaster's senior leadership team and collaborating with the Associate Headmaster and the Heads of Middle and Upper School in strategic planning as well as focused efforts to achieve horizontal and vertical alignment of the 1-12 curriculum.

- Refining and developing Lower School curricula and programs to ensure a challenging and developmentally appropriate experience for boys.
- Promoting a community in which parents, faculty, staff, and students feel safe and valued.
- Hiring, supervising, mentoring, and evaluating knowledgeable and committed Lower School faculty and staff in consultation with the Associate Headmaster and other key administrators.
- Ensuring that administrative structures and processes effectively support both the daily operations and the strategic goals of the division.
- Fostering a growth mindset and encouraging the achievement of professional goals among faculty both through formal development plans and by leading ongoing conversations about best practices and trends in curriculum, pedagogy, and educational technology.
- Working collaboratively with Parents' Association representatives and maintaining open and ongoing communication with all Lower School parents with regard to curriculum, programs, school events, and individual student issues.
- Being an active and visible presence in all areas of school life, from classrooms to afterschool activities and events.

Candidate Qualities

Leadership

- One who has high expectations for himself or herself and whose experience, intellect, and dedication to the academic, physical, social, and character development of young boys inspire the confidence of others.
- A team-oriented and service-minded individual who leads through influence and collaboration rather than solely exercising the power of his or her office.
- An adept manager who is aware of important division matters at all times while still being comfortable delegating to an experienced and responsible faculty and staff.
- An educator who balances the need for scope, sequence, and general consistency in educational approaches with appropriate autonomy and flexibility for faculty members.

Experience

- Experience as a teacher and leader in independent schools, including working at the early childhood or elementary school level, with an emphasis on institutions known for their strong academic programs.
- A history of collaborating with department heads, faculty, and staff to refine educational policy, curriculum, and programs.
- Exposure to hiring, motivating, mentoring, managing, and evaluating an exceptional faculty and staff, ideally including experience designing and implementing professional development programs.
- A track record of working successfully with a variety of constituencies, including administrators, faculty, parents, and students.

Skills and Knowledge

- A broad and deep knowledge of elementary education, including an awareness of current best practices, brain research, developmental stages, and educational trends.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Strategic thinking skills that allow one to promote a vision, to develop and communicate a strategy, and to see a plan through to practical execution, all while exercising the flexibility necessary to respond to shifting priorities and unexpected challenges.
- The ability to contribute meaningfully to a team and culture within the context of an institution's history, traditions, and values, including working effectively with both new and veteran faculty and staff members.
- The ability to balance rigorous academics, developmentally appropriate approaches, and a sense of play in educating young boys.
- Strong problem solving and critical thinking skills, including a talent for moving easily between details and "the big picture."

Personal Attributes

- A person of unquestioned honesty and integrity who interacts with people in a straightforward fashion.

- One whose high emotional intelligence allows him or her to understand the motivations and perspectives of others and to develop genuine and meaningful relationships with a variety of constituents.
- A servant leader who is self-confident and assured but lacks arrogance or pretension.
- A proactive, energetic, and innovative educator who is constantly thinking about the best ways to educate boys, is not afraid to try new approaches, and is motivated by what is best for students.
- A good listener who respects differences of opinion, seeks consensus when appropriate, and is comfortable making difficult decisions.
- A person who embraces single-sex education, is excited about being in a boys' school, and has a genuine passion for the mission of St. Mark's.

Other Considerations

<u>Compensation</u>	Expected to be in the top decile of NAIS schools in the region.
<u>Education</u>	Bachelor's degree required; master's degree strongly preferred.
<u>Website</u>	www.smtexas.org
<u>Candidates May Now Be:</u>	<p>A Head of Lower School, Assistant Head of School, or other senior administrator who is open to a move for professional growth.</p> <p>A mid-level administrator or teacher whose formal and informal leadership experience has equipped him or her with the skills and knowledge required for this position.</p> <p>A Head of School of a smaller, high quality institution.</p>

For more information, contact:

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