



Head of School

*St. Johns Country Day School
Orange Park, Florida*

July 2020 • sjcds.net



The Opportunity

St. Johns Country Day School sits on 26 picturesque acres just off the banks of the St. Johns River, the longest river in the state of Florida and one of the most famous north-flowing rivers in the world. Like its namesake, St. Johns Country Day is a storied school with a long history of defying expectations. Though all graduates go to college, fit is more important than prestige. Though the school's academic reputation is excellent, students may reach the highest levels of artistic and athletic pursuits as well. Though St. Johns is a school of three divisions, it is decidedly one school in terms of culture and program. St. Johns seeks a Head of School who will continue to deliver the school's promise of being college prep, redefined.

St. Johns provides a superior college preparatory program with a diverse curriculum that stresses academic accomplishment, artistic expression, and athletic participation in a supportive family atmosphere that fosters self-reliance and ethical responsibility.

St. Johns excels because of its highly qualified, committed, and respected faculty; outstanding leadership at all three divisions; and nurturing family environment. Students

benefit from close relationships with teachers, small classes, and a curriculum that is both broad and deep. St. Johns is intentionally small and programmatically large. It is a school where students are encouraged to pursue their passions in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.

The successful candidate for Head of School at St. Johns will have strong executive leadership skills while valuing the school's family atmosphere. He or she will continue to push what is possible while respecting the culture and traditions of an established school. The best candidate will be a connector, both within the St. Johns community and in the larger Orange Park and Jacksonville areas. With the right leadership in place, the ceiling for what St. Johns can become is incredibly high.

St. Johns Country Day is a nonsectarian, coeducational, day school serving 564 students in prekindergarten through grade twelve.

To Apply

St. Johns Country Day School has selected **Southern Teachers** to lead the search for their next Head of School. For application instructions, please see the last page of this profile.



SOUTHERN TEACHERS
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Performance Objectives

As leader of a premier college preparatory school, the Head of School at St. Johns will seek continual improvement of a progressive curriculum that provides students with a strong foundation of skills and a path to appropriate further education.

He or she will inspire the community across all constituencies, respect the school's traditions and roots while preparing students for the modern world, challenge all students to succeed while ensuring they all are known and loved, and foster robust school spirit and an environment that respects all religions and cultures.

The Head of School will join a school community that has made great strides towards ensuring sustainability for generations to come. Specifically, the Head of School will work with the board and staff to achieve the following objectives:

Execute current strategic plan and lay groundwork for the next strategic planning process

St. Johns has a current strategic plan with measurable goals for finance, fundraising, facilities, talent management, and enrollment through 2023. The next Head of School will execute this plan and work with the board to review and renew aims over the first three years of his or her tenure and prepare the school community for the next strategic planning process.

Set targets and strategy for enrollment

Over the past year, the school has made considerable improvements in staffing, data tracking, and marketing. The pieces are now in place for effective enrollment management strategy, and demographics in the area suggest the possibility of significant growth. The Head of School will partner with the Board to determine viable enrollment numbers, work with the admissions and communication team to further differentiate St. Johns in the market, and achieve enrollment goals.

Financial sustainability

One of the strengths of St. Johns is the quality of its finance team, both on the board and on staff. St. Johns benefits from a healthy endowment and cash reserve, which has helped the school weather recent softening in enrollment. The Head of School will address hard and soft revenue projections against expenses to ensure the long-term financial health of the school.



Fundraising

St. Johns set records in annual giving for the 2018-19 school year thanks to a shift towards more restricted giving, better outreach to alumni, and an emphasis on building a culture of philanthropy. A strong relationship between the Development and Communications team has resulted in highly effective messaging. The next Head of School will work with the team and the board to set ambitious short- and long-term goals for fundraising to build on current momentum.

Leverage one school, one campus

A clear differentiator for St. Johns is the fact that it is the only PK through 12 school on one campus in the market. Through collaboration of three excellent division heads, work is well underway to better unite the divisions in terms of curriculum and instruction, traditions, and culture. The Head of School will look for more ways to pull the entire school community together and leverage this unique quality of the school to improve retention and enrollment.





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The Position

The Head of School is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, the ongoing supervision and evaluation of all faculty and staff, and setting standards for professional development. The Head oversees the school's curriculum and facilities and plays an active role in admissions, student life, community outreach, and fundraising. Working closely with the school's Board of Trustees to set policies and to construct the strategic and educational direction for the school, the Head will work within the framework of the school's culture, policies, procedures, and Board-approved budget to

- Ensure the holistic educational development and effective operation of the school.
- Promote the achievement of excellence in academics, arts, and athletics.
- Maintain high standards of ethical and moral responsibilities.
- Continue to refine and deliver on the school's strategic plans.

Qualities and Traits

Candidates may not possess all of these qualities with the same degree of strength, but the school's Head Search Committee will focus on those who come closest to the ideal characteristics noted below:

- Attainment of a master's degree or higher, preferably in education or a related field
- Leadership experience in management at the executive level
- Success in working collaboratively with large groups to achieve common goals
- Classroom teaching and administrative experience in a comparable independent school
- Excellent communication skills and the desire to connect with others
- Willingness to be "out and about" on campus and in the community.

Fellowship Program

The St. Johns Fellowship program offers students the opportunity to explore areas of interest, pursue an area of passion, and facilitate "deep dive" explorations. For the upcoming school year, St. Johns will offer diverse fellowships in areas ranging from arts and humanities to community engagement to health sciences. Mentors help Fellows access learning opportunities, plan research projects, and pursue off-campus networking and internships. A great example of the power of the Fellowship program is in Computer Science. Students in this program provide helpdesk services, shadow school technology staff, and use 3D printers and other technology to solve problems. They have participated in beta testing of software and designed practical solutions to real problems, such as creating Apple TV remote holders for teachers who routinely misplaced these vanishing devices. They have gained practical experience in collaborative project management, design, implementation, and product refinement more similar to what they would gain in the workforce rather than the traditional classroom. The Fellowship program at St. Johns is a perfect example of "college prep, redefined."

- Inspirational style that allows others to flourish
- Ability to readily cultivate relationships with alumni, donors, and the community.
- Imaginativeness and creativity to address the challenges and opportunities ahead for the school and its students.
- Warm, outgoing personality characterized by approachability, caring, and a sense of humor.
- Experience in making and supporting decisions in difficult times.
- Motivation to be fully involved in the life of the school and its students.





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The School

Founded in 1953 and recognized as one of the pre-eminent schools in Florida, St. Johns Country Day School is a non-denominational college preparatory school located near the St. Johns River.

St. Johns provides an outstanding academic foundation while simultaneously developing students' artistic awareness, physical development, and the confidence and personal skills essential for a successful life. Each year since its inception, 100% of St. Johns graduates have been admitted to college, matriculating at the nation's leading colleges and universities.

St. Johns Country Day School is accredited by the the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) and the Florida Kindergarten Council. St. Johns is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the Cum Laude Society, and the National Honor Society.

History

St. Johns Country Day School recently celebrated its 65th year in 2018. It was founded by Dr. Edwin P. Heinrich, formerly the head of the Upper Division at the Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C., and his wife Dorothea, a teacher and reading specialist. They, along with a small group of local parents, recognized the need for a quality, co-educational, independent, college preparatory school and St. Johns opened on September 14, 1953, with 25 students in grades one through ten. During the school's second year, it was accredited by the Florida State Department of Education and became a charter member of the Florida Council of Independent Schools, which Dr. Heinrich helped found.

Academics

St. Johns provides a rigorous academic curriculum, taught by exceptional faculty, designed to help each child achieve his or her personal best. A student-faculty ratio of 12 to 1 assures the continuation of a family atmosphere where teachers foster a love of learning at every age.

The overall objective of the preschool is to develop in each child a positive self-concept, a sense of personal responsibility, creativity, self-control, positive peer relationships, verbal skills, appropriate learning skills, and an ability to interact in groups. As students move up through the Lower School (preschool through Grade 5), students learn in an environment that provides a rich blend of strong academics combined with opportunities for individual and social growth. The Lower School curriculum provides a solid foundation for future study and emphasizes skill mastery in all areas of learning.



The Middle School (Grades 6-8) is dedicated to fostering in students a positive sense of self-esteem and an enthusiasm for lifelong learning. The curriculum provides a well-rounded education through a comprehensive approach to English, mathematics, science, technology, history, foreign languages, physical education, and the fine arts. The faculty and administration take into consideration the different learning styles, social interaction, and disciplinary needs of Middle School students in a manner that is developmentally responsive to the needs of the early adolescent.





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The School *(Continued)*

The Upper School (Grades 9-12) offers a demanding college preparatory curriculum that instills self-discipline and guides the development of academic proficiency, analytical skills, and creative thinking—vital components to post-secondary success. Small classes provide opportunities for meaningful class participation and individualized student-teacher interaction, as well as tutorial help when needed. St. Johns offers many opportunities for Advanced Placement, honors, dual enrollment, virtual, and independent study courses. Exposure to world languages begins in preschool and continues in the Lower, Middle, and Upper schools. For example, an outstanding Latin program slowly nurtures students, culminating in Honors Latin Literature and AP Latin in the fourth and fifth years.

St. Johns students find that their work within the traditional college preparatory curriculum and their exposure to the school's wide extracurricular offerings have prepared them for an easy transition into the country's most demanding colleges and universities. Recent graduates have attended American, Army, Boston University, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, Emory, the University of Florida, Florida State University, Georgetown, Georgia Tech, McGill University, University of Miami, Michigan, Navy, NYU, Princeton, Villanova, University of Virginia, Wake Forest, and many other elite universities and colleges around the country.

Fine Arts

A comprehensive fine and performing arts program in the visual arts, music, drama, and dance is integral to the St. Johns experience. Involvement with the arts is considered an essential component of a complete education. Members of the arts faculty are practicing artists who provide excellent models and superior leadership to students at all levels. Graduates have pursued careers as graphic artists, actors, musicians, singers, printmakers, animators, film makers, and art teachers.

Athletics

St. Johns proudly sponsors 32 interscholastic teams which train and compete in some of the finest athletic facilities in the area. Sports opportunities include baseball, basketball, cheerleading, crew, cross country, football, golf, soccer,

At a Glance

- Founded: **1953**
- Grades: **PS3-12**
- Total Enrollment: **564**
- LS Enrollment (PS3-5): **175**
- MS Enrollment (6-8): **171**
- US Enrollment (9-12): **218**
- Students Receiving Aid: **28%**
- Total Faculty: **65**
- Student/Faculty Ratio: **14:1**
- Faculty with Postgrad Degrees: **33%**
- Highest Tuition: **\$18,995**
- Annual Budget: **\$9,500,000**
- Endowment: **\$4,000,000**
- Annual Giving Goal: **\$450,000**
- Accreditation: **FCIS (2019)**
- Board of Trustees: **21**

softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. Students may begin interscholastic competition in grade six. Everyone is encouraged to participate, and many sports are accessible to students of varying abilities.

Campus

St. Johns is situated on a beautiful 26-acre wooded campus in Orange Park, Florida, six miles south of Jacksonville. The campus includes 14 buildings set among stately oaks, landscaped grounds, and a natural setting. The gated campus provides a secure learning environment for all students, from age three through grade twelve. The Heinrich Learning Resource Center is a multi-function building enabling individual students and faculty members to engage in various educational and research tasks simultaneously. Other facilities include a 600-seat Performing Arts Center, fine arts building, foreign language lab, 3D Design and Innovation Lab, two gymnasiums, swimming pool, tennis courts, athletic fields, and playgrounds.





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The School *(Continued)*

School Community

The 65 talented and dedicated faculty possess the skills to teach, the compassion to nurture, and the creativity to make the academic challenge a road to discovery. The heart of this academic institution remains committed to the original alliance between school and home from which it was born. Faculty, administrators, coaches, families, and friends all work together to meet the needs of each student. St. Johns is in contact with over 2,000 alumni, nearly half of whom live in the greater Jacksonville area.

The Community

St. Johns is located in Orange Park, a suburb of Jacksonville, the largest city in area in the continental United States and a rapidly growing metropolitan city in Northeast Florida of approximately 850,000 residents. The area's growth can be attributed to its convenient location, mild climate, and reasonable cost of living. Millennials are particularly drawn to the Jacksonville area as they earn \$15K above the national average of their peers.

This momentum continues to boost Jacksonville's stature in the national and international marketplace. Jacksonville is consistently rated one of the 'Hottest Cities in America' for business expansions and relocations. One of Jacksonville's many natural assets is one of the largest urban park systems in the country. The active and passive parks and preservation lands are a key part of Jacksonville's quality of life. So are the miles of beaches and waterways, a major symphony orchestra, a sports and entertainment complex downtown and a myriad of special events that this sports-loving city hosts each year. The home of the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, the city welcomed its first Super Bowl in 2005.

With a growing population, a strong economy, diverse cultural and recreational opportunities and abundant natural resources, the Jacksonville area continues to distinguish itself as one of the nation's most dynamic and progressive cities.



Excellence, Redefined

St. Johns believes one of its great strengths is its size. Being neither a small nor a large school, St. Johns offers all students the opportunity to participate while also achieving tremendous success. Perhaps nothing at the school better exemplifies this balance than the athletic program. St. Johns' athletics program fosters motivation and encourages participation while developing individuals' skills and fitness. Nearly all students at St. Johns are a part of a Middle School, junior varsity, or varsity team, many participating in more than sport. The emphasis on participation does not, however, belie success in competition. Though St. Johns teams have achieved success at the state level in cross country, baseball, softball among others, perhaps no program illustrates the St. Johns balance than the girls soccer team. Proud of its no-cut policy, St. Johns girls soccer teams have won eight consecutive state championships and twice finished the season ranked as the top program in the country. The St. Johns athletic program proves that exceptional does not have to mean exclusive, and character development need not be sacrificed in pursuit of victory.



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Application Process & Timeline

Candidates for the Head of School position should submit [applications](#) to Southern Teachers (available at [SouthernTeachers.com](#)) along with a current resume and a cover letter explaining their interest in and qualifications for this leadership position.

Questions may be directed to Mr. Jamie Estes at Estes@SouthernTeachers.com or **434-295-9122**. *Please do not contact the school.*

Initial interviews with the consultant at Southern Teachers will be ongoing.

The new Head of School will begin work July 2020.

