

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL SCHOOL FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

ST. JAMES MISSION STATEMENT

The St. James Episcopal School Mission is to develop each child to his or her fullest potential, spiritually, intellectually, and physically, that each may grow in grace, enjoy freedom through knowledge, and lead a healthy, productive, and meaningful life.



St. James Episcopal School has been a leading educational institution in South Texas since 1946. St. James focuses on mind, body, and spirit, instilling in each child a love of God, love of learning, and respect for one another. Academic excellence and strong Spiritual Formation classes develop servant leaders of high moral character. Unique compliments to our strong academic curriculum are the Frazier STREAM Innovation Center, our outdoor education instruction, enrichment classes, and a robust athletics program. The St. James experience focuses on the whole child, instilling a genuine love of learning and a desire to grow in knowledge, stature, and grace. St. James Episcopal School strives to maintain its local historical leadership position and to acknowledge its role as a recognized model of excellence in the Episcopal tradition.

MISSION

Goal: To strengthen the St. James community by fostering inclusiveness and trust through consistent communication to all constituents.

Rationale:

St. James Episcopal School is committed to providing the most nurturing and challenging educational environment for its scholars, preparing them to be servant leaders in an ever-changing global community. We expect each member of the School community to support the values and the Mission of the School, exhibiting kindness, compassion, responsibility, and respect. St. James Episcopal School is an inclusive, open, and nurturing environment for all persons, supporting shared goals and values, moral development, and ethical behavior.

Action Steps:

- Provide multiple opportunities for involvement to strengthen connections to current and past parents, grandparents, St. James Alumni, and Church members.
- Clarify and communicate the shared values and commitment of the School clearly and consistently among all constituencies.
- Require a signed parent contract for each St. James scholar, ensuring commitment to the expectations, values, and Mission of St. James.
- Provide a formalized admissions and enrollment process offering personalized attention to current and potential families, legacies, and siblings who are mission appropriate.
- Create specific opportunities to encourage the involvement of Alumni and grandparent constituencies in the life of the school.
- Provide reinforcement of the School's Episcopal identity and inclusiveness through consistent communication of the School's Mission and non-discrimination policy.

EPISCOPAL IDENTITY, SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Goal: To ensure the collaborative, beneficial relationship continues between the Church of the Good Shepherd and St. James Episcopal School now and for future generations of South Texans.

Rationale:

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd has been a center for ministry in Corpus Christi. Good Shepherd serves the Kingdom of God through the love of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Sharing a common mission, both the Church and the School are inseparable, and each is vital to the success of the other. Together, we foster an environment of respect, kindness, and love for all people which is inclusive and authentic. Sharing common space, serving a diverse community, and working to transform the lives of children and adults, the Church and the School commit to deepening this valuable relationship for the benefit of the community.

Action Steps:

- Communicate directly, consistently and on a formal, bi-annual basis through the *Administrative Liaison Committee* and in daily interactions of staff and members of both institutions.
- Partner in all events and activities where appropriate, offering all families the opportunity to experience Episcopal traditions.
- Provide a curriculum for Spiritual Formation and Chapel for all scholars that is vertically aligned, consistent, comprehensive, and in keeping with our Episcopal identity.
- Nurture and support the relationship between Church and School leadership.
- Use multiple avenues of communication to strength connections to current and past parents, grandparents, St. James Alumni, and Church members.
- Establish specific criteria for service learning opportunities among all grade levels.

GOVERNANCE

Goal: To continue a high level of governance which will include the most able trustees from South Texas and ensure the excellence of St. James Episcopal School for the benefit of our scholars and our community.

Rationale:

The successes of St. James Episcopal School today are the work of yesterday's Board of Trustees. As the entity that holds the School in trust, it is essential each Board Member and the Board as a corporate entity continuously strive to grow for the benefit of the School. The School commits itself to being a model of excellence, and the Board must continue to evolve corporately as an ever-improving governing body, with the goal of functioning at the highest level of service to the school.

Action Steps:

- Communicate the roles and responsibilities of each Board member, including expectations of service, financial efforts, and commitment.
- Conduct a yearly Board Orientation to train, develop, and mentor all Board members, ensuring confidence throughout the body of governance.
- Hold an annual gathering of the Board of Trustees and the Vestry of the Church of the Good Shepherd, reinforcing consistent collaboration and communication.
- Review and update Board of Trustee Bylaws, policy manuals, and operational procedures based on best practices as proposed by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools.
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the Head of School and the Board of Trustees, according to NAIS Standards.
- Provide consistent succession plans for Board of Trustee Committees and Executive leadership through the Committee on Trustees.
- Communicate the role and the work of the Board of Trustees to the greater St. James community.
- Conduct long term and strategic work of the Board of Trustees through standing committees of the BOT, per the Bylaws.

ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

Goal: To ensure St. James hires and retains the most qualified and committed faculty, staff, and administration and provides opportunities for ongoing professional development.

Rationale:

St. James Episcopal School is committed to supporting the most qualified faculty, staff, and administration who support the Mission of the School utilizing their individual strengths. We are intentional in our efforts to seek excellence, diversity of talents, and commitment from those who will deliver the highest quality of education to our scholars.

Action Steps:

- Attract, support, and retain faculty, staff, and administrators of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and talents, prioritizing degrees, certifications, and/or masters in designated fields of study.
- Ensure faculty, staff, and administration compensation and benefits are competitive, reaching or exceeding 85% average of the public schools and surrounding districts.
- Provide professional development opportunities, both individually and whole group, to promote an environment in which lifelong learning is expected and supported.
- Update and maintain clear job descriptions, standards of expectations, and formal observation and evaluation procedures for staff.
- Utilize a formal process to identify individualized professional development opportunities through compensation discussions and evaluation conferences.
- Review and update the Administrative/Staff Handbook to include roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, financial management systems and timelines, admission policies, and other administrative functions.
- Continue to provide training in the use of Depth and Complexity and differentiated instruction for current and new teachers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Goal: To facilitate learning through the utilization of high-level thinking strategies and questions, requiring all scholars to prove their answers with evidence.

Rationale:

St. James Episcopal School is committed to fostering and providing a learning environment which emphasizes Christian values, positive self-esteem, rigorous academic standards, and civic service and responsibilities. Using the *Core Knowledge Sequence (PK-8th Grades)*, teachers are trained in the use of Interdisciplinary instructional strategies, multiple intelligence teaching, positive discipline management, and utilization of the elements of Depth and Complexity, making connections to encourage high levels of cognitive development and foster actual brain growth. This research-based method develops a life-long love of learning. The school environment will cultivate an appreciation for learning, which will enable scholars to function as creative, intrinsically motivated, responsible citizens to the maximum extent of their abilities and ambitions.

Action Steps:

Over-Arching Structure of Program

- Utilize the *Core Knowledge Sequence* to provide a sequential, cumulative, and content specific foundation in all subject areas, for all grade levels, to promote academic growth and continuity.
- Design lessons which incorporate multiple intelligences, Interdisciplinary instructional strategies, utilizing the elements of Depth and Complexity to increase higher level thinking skills.
- Use global theme concepts at each grade level to ensure scholars are taught to look at the world through a global lens, identifying essential, conceptual truths and generalizations.
- Schedule bi-annual core curricular cross grade level meetings to ensure quality of instruction and sequence of content and skills.
- Design lessons which implement the use of Marzano's nine instructional strategies for effective teaching and learning.
- Use relevant data, collected from standardized testing, student work, and teacher observations to evaluate strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Require memorization and presentation opportunities on a regular basis (at least monthly).

Primary School Action Steps:

Global Theme - Order

- Fully utilize the Spalding total language arts program - *The Writing Road to Reading*, an explicit, sequential, multisensory, diagnostic, and comprehensive curriculum for spelling, writing, and reading in Pre-Primary through Fourth Grades.
- Administer the *Gesell Developmental Observation* to all entering Kindergarten scholars to facilitate effective curriculum assignment, create a developmentally appropriate environment, and promote realistic expectations of child behavior/performance.
- Comply fully with the requirements of the *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers* to ensure the protection, safety, and well-being of all children in the licensed child-care center. (Pre-Primary)

Lower School Action Steps:

Global Themes - JK/Order, K/Patterns, 1/Systems, 2/Change, 3/Interdependence, 4/Structures

- Fully utilize the Spalding total language arts program - *The Writing Road to Reading*, an explicit, sequential, multisensory, diagnostic, and comprehensive curriculum for spelling, writing, and reading in Pre-Primary through Fourth Grades.
- Administer the *Gesell Developmental Observation* to recommended Kindergarten scholars and incoming Kindergarten and First Grade scholars to facilitate effective curriculum assignment and ensure appropriate placement.
- Administer the *Fall CTP5 Educational Research Bureau (ERB)* standardized assessment to all scholars. (2nd-8th Grades)

Middle School Action Steps:

Global Themes - 5/Relationships, 6/Order, 7/Systems, 8/Change

- Embed applicable curriculum into the content of the Outdoor Education Programs offered at each specific grade level. 5th/Environmental Science, 6th/Science and Ecology, 7th/Texas History and Team Building, 8th/American History.
- Administer the *Fall CTP5 Educational Research Bureau* (ERB) standardized assessment to all scholars, 2nd-8th Grades.
- Continuing to use the *Core Knowledge Sequence (5th-8th Grades)*, teachers will apply the Elements of Depth and Complexity across each specific discipline to foster high levels of cognitive development, rigorous academic sequential progress, and ensure scholars are prepared to excel in future educational opportunities.

Instructional Program: Math

- Provide a rigorous, sequential mathematics program, using algebraic reasoning, readiness and problem-solving methods, six elements of Depth and Complexity, and *Core Knowledge Sequence* (K-6th Grades).
- Provide Honors and Advanced class options to prepare scholars for High School mathematics to ensure scholars complete Geometry or are Geometry ready entering High School (7th-8th Grades).

Instructional Program: Language Arts

- Teach the writing process to ensure scholars progress from basic sentence structure to multi-paragraph compositions of various types (narrative, informative, persuasive, descriptive).
- Develop technical writing skills and follow organizational guidelines to study a specific topic and write a relevant, focused research paper (K-8th Grades).

Instructional Program: Social Studies

- Use an interdisciplinary study approach to coordinate the Social Studies program with the Language Arts program, supporting the curriculum through research, literature selections, and compositions.
- Continually integrate and provide a historical basis for current events.

Instructional Program: Science

- Organize, equip, and utilize both Lower and Middle School science labs to provide lab opportunities for all scholars, K-8.
- Provide an advanced class option to prepare scholars for High School science and ensure completion of Integrated Physics and Chemistry.

Instructional Program: Foreign Language

- Provide weekly Spanish classes (bi- and tri-weekly) for scholars in Pre-Primary-3rd grade.
- Provide Spanish classes daily (4th-8th Grades) dividing into Honors and Advanced classes starting in 7th grade to ensure scholars enter High School with at least one Spanish credit.

Instructional Program: Enrichments

- Provide fine arts enrichment opportunities through weekly classes in the following subjects: art, drama, music, speech, and spiritual formation.

Instructional Program: Library

- Train scholars in the use of EBSCO informational services to provide library resources, K-12, and opportunities to research across the disciplines.
- Provide scholars the opportunity to test and track goals and progress in reading through the use of the Accelerated Reader Program (1st-5th and Kinder ready).

Instructional Program: Technology

- Provide weekly computer instruction (K-5th) in the Computer Lab, beginning with basic skills of keyboarding, educational games, advance computer applications, and computer presentations.
- Provide opportunities for all scholars to utilize smart boards and offer “bring your own device” opportunities for 5th-8th grades.
- Maintain the Computer Lab to provide access and opportunities for research, group projects, and technology access for 5th-8th grades.

Instructional Program: STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, the Arts, Math)

- Schedule a yearly STREAM Day to promote the initiative *Full STREAM Ahead*, providing opportunities to participate in hands-on activities with presenters from local entities in STREAM fields (1st-8th Grades).
- Utilize the Frazier STREAM Innovation Center to provide curriculum to explore STREAM disciplines and media arts through applied technology and project-based learning (K-8th Grades).
- Utilize the Frazier Broadcasting Studio daily to provide morning announcements and additional broadcasting and studio technology experience in media production on both sides of the camera (4th-8th Grades).

Instructional Program: Physical Education/Health/Sports

- Provide PE classes daily for all scholars (PP-8th), focusing on agility training, gross motor development, class and team cooperation, and physical health.
- Provide competitive sports opportunities to develop specific skills, leadership opportunities, and positive sportsmanship ethics in volleyball, track, tennis, basketball, golf, and sailing (4th-8th Grades).

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Goal: To build revenue streams to enhance cash reserves and endowments, and fund tuition assistance and professional development to ensure the long-term future of the School.

Rationale:

St. James Episcopal School is committed to strengthening its current financial stability and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the School. As a tuition-driven school, relying on enrollment as the primary source of income, St. James must broaden its financial foundation, secure alternative sources of revenue, and develop a long-term, strategic financial plan to maximize financial stability and prepare for potential growth.

Action Steps:

- Develop and implement a flexible enrollment based five-year financial plan, setting specific goals for faculty salary scale, tuition, annual fund, professional development, curriculum, and major gifts.
- Cultivate increased opportunities for planned giving with a focus on alumni engagement.
- Continue to build the Annual Fund to maintain overall participation of giving from the parent community at 100% and increase the total amount of dollars raised to a goal of 10% of the annual budget.
- Grow the current Endowments through gifts and sound investment policy to \$6,000,000.
- Develop an Acceptance/Spend Policy for gifts and endowments.
- Review and update the current Cost Sharing Agreement between the Church of the Good Shepherd and the School.

FACILITIES AND SAFETY

Goal: To ensure the campus meets the educational and worship needs of the Church and the School and to ensure the safety of all scholars, faculty, staff, parishioners, and visitors.

Rationale:

St. James Episcopal School and the Church of the Good Shepherd share a common campus, being blessed with a beautiful and functional environment for worship, fellowship, study, and play. With its unique urban location, St. James must be properly equipped to meet the needs of a changing population and be prepared to serve scholars expected to be leaders in the global community. The current space and overall facilities are continually evaluated to meet the needs of the Community. Through intentional stewardship, the Building and Grounds Committee and the Church and School administration will monitor and evaluate the facilities/safety improvements which may be required.

Action Steps:

- Review and assess all technology needs on an ongoing basis, ensuring the School anticipates and provides for the future needs and program offerings.
- Collaborate in the stewardship of common spaces and facilities, maintaining the grounds and learning spaces to the highest health, safety, and efficiency standards.
- Inspect all fire extinguishers and safety equipment yearly.
- Update *Material Safety Data Sheets* (MSDS) in Science Lab and Office to reflect current information.
- Review and update emergency Crisis Plan and risk management plan yearly.
- Maintain files for student custody papers in a secure location (Office).
- Organize and maintain staff files, documenting all employees have background checks and *Safeguarding God's Children* Training.