



The Christ School

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY:
The Christ School
Orlando, Florida

July 1, 2017

thechristschool.org



The Christ School presents an outstanding leadership opportunity for a highly qualified candidate to lead a flourishing school to its next level of institutional achievement. TCS seeks an executive leader who will build on the strengths of a vibrant, cohesive school community with a well-deserved reputation for high-quality Christian education, a school in a strong financial position. The next Head of School will find a committed professional faculty and support staff and a supportive board of trustees. Because of its highly desirable downtown location, TCS offers extraordinary cultural, artistic, athletic, and service opportunities. Read on to learn specifics about the opportunity to lead a school operating from a position of strength and institutional stability, guided by its mission and focused on the potential of bright future prospects for its students.

Located in the heart of downtown Orlando, The Christ School has been serving families and students for more than twenty years. When TCS opened its doors in 1996, fifty-two students enrolled. The first 8th-grade graduation took place in 2001, and the school currently enrolls 375 students in its "Transitional kindergarten" (TK) through 8th grade programs. The Christ School's successes reflect its clearly articulated mission and philosophy as a Christian independent school embracing the wide-ranging attributes of an independent school and a distinctively Christian ethos and culture.

OUR MISSION

The Christ School partners with families to provide an academically rigorous and Christ-centered K-8 experience.

Our students and graduates confidently pursue excellence in scholarship, service and leadership.

OUR VISION

The Christ School is a learning community that provides a Christ-centered academic experience which shapes the hearts and minds of children for the kingdom of God while establishing a strong foundation for life.

The school's successes in only twenty years confirm both its mission and its offerings. Its webpage observes that "In 1994, a small group of parents pursued a vision of superior education that would be Christ-centered, nurturing and located in downtown Orlando. The Christ School was the answer.... For 20 years, The Christ School has embraced its downtown location and has benefited from relationships with the city's business, government, arts and service organizations." On the campus of First Presbyterian Church of Orlando, TCS is situated in a metropolitan area of more than two million residents.

The metropolitan area's populace is ethnically and culturally diverse. Orlando has been cited as one of the most-technology-savvy economies in the United States and is home to a number of colleges and the University of Central Florida, the largest university in the state—and one of the largest in the country. A distinct advantage of its downtown location is that TCS can avail itself of all of downtown Orlando's rich cultural, artistic,

and educational resources. Exceptional opportunities for experiential learning are all near to the school's campus. Walt Disney World, a global tourist attraction, is approximately thirty miles from the TCS campus.

In 1999, the Christian Schools of Florida association granted full accreditation to the school. TCS is now accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) and the Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC). The school is in process of becoming a member of the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability (CESA).

Having served TCS for the past eleven years of its growth, the current Head of School, Dr. Jason Powell, will be leaving at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. That stability leaves the school well-positioned to welcome as its next head of school an accomplished Christian educational leader. TCS families cite the "sense of community" and the outstanding faculty as reasons for the school's flourishing and continued success.



WHO SHOULD APPLY

For this position, beginning in July 2017, the TCS Board of Trustees seeks candidates with specific personal and spiritual attributes: a mature Christian, committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture; an articulate and effective communicator; and a person who is both warm and approachable. The professional attributes the Board of Trustees seeks include: independent-school experience; effective organizational management; successful fundraising experience; a collaborative, team-building temperament; and strategic-thinking and –planning skills with a willingness to hold others accountable for their own responsibilities. In brief, this position represents an exceptional professional opportunity for an educational leader who will embrace both the school’s mission and its distinctively Christian roots. Ideally, the next Head of School will work with Dr. Powell during the 2016-2017 to effect a smooth leadership transition.

PHILOSOPHY

In several key documents, the school consistently uses the phrase “Christ-centered academic experience.” That clear missional emphasis results in a distinctive thoughtfulness and clear sense of purpose that characterizes all aspects of the school’s programs. Its publicized “Christian Beliefs and Convictions” concisely conveys the school’s deep Christian roots. The school’s “Core Values” statement lists and elaborates upon the following six core characteristics: Christ-centered, Academic Quality, Community, Excellence, Service, Leadership, and Flourishing, each grounded in specific passages of Scripture.

Another compelling indication of the distinctive thoughtfulness and sense of purpose that inform the school’s institutional culture is its statement emphasizing the academic rigor of the curriculum. “Fides: A Structure for Academic Excellence” articulates “the embodiment of

The Christ School’s curriculum in practice” and details “five core elements of our curriculum”: pedagogy, design, reflection, measurement, and communication. Thus the spiritually and scripturally grounded, holistic mission and vision of the school are epitomized in its core statements of program and purpose.

DEFINING STRENGTHS & ATTRIBUTES

Among parents, students, administrators, and faculty, TCS enjoys a clearly stated, strong sense of community. Adding to this sense of school community is an acknowledgment that the faculty is professionally accomplished and committed, well-suited to the school’s mission and philosophy. Reflecting the professional caliber of the faculty is a strong academic program, geared toward significant student achievement—tied in with strong support for individualized needs. Further, the school effectively nurtures Christian faith among its students and is intentional about integrating faith and learning as a means of shaping students’ Christian worldviews. “Partnering with Families” reiterates and re-affirms the Christ-centered heart of the school’s programs. Emphasizing such key elements in the school-parent partnership as “Trust & Respect,” “Clear Communication,” and “Collaborative Engagement,” the school declares its intention to forge a faithful, scripturally based relationship with its families. These core documents will greatly aid the next Head of School in embracing and appreciating TCS as a Christian independent school.

Two other important strengths will be of interest to qualified candidates. One is that the current Head of School and Board of Trustees enjoy an active and collaborative working relationship. Such a working relationship will go a long way toward effectively creating a healthy, productive relationship between the new head and the TCS board. That relationship reflects the strength of the school’s culture and will allow for the school to continue its growth and its successes as a Christian independent school. The school has already gone through the strategic process of creating the “Portrait of a Graduate” and a companion piece, “Faculty Characteristics of Professional Excellence.”

The “Portrait” embraces both the academic and spiritual pillars of the school, and the “Faculty Characteristics” encapsulates and summarizes the defining personal, professional, and spiritual attributes of the school’s faculty. Both of these documents will provide the next Head of School invaluable insights into both the student body and the faculty.

The next Head of School will also benefit from the school’s solid financial position.

The budget is balanced; there is no debt; the school maintains a healthy cash reserve; and enrollment has grown over the past six years.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Christ School’s next Head of School will face challenges familiar to most faith-based schools: maintaining and preserving its core Christian values—its mission—in an increasingly secular culture. While the majority of inquiring or interested families will be drawn to TCS because of its mission as a Christian-independent school, some will be more interested in the academic and community-building aspects of the school. The next head and administrative-leadership team will have to discern carefully a balance between outreach to Christian families and those for whom the distinctively Christian mission may be at most a neutral attribute.

Another challenge will be the three-fold enrollment-management piece of maintaining, growing, and retaining current students school-wide but particularly in the middle school. The school’s mission and vision statements make plain its intention to enroll and retain students who are mission-appropriate.

Parents have expressed strong interest in expanded athletic and extracurricular offerings for TCS students. Parent surveys also clearly indicate concerns about facilities and the challenges of space in the school’s downtown campus. The new Head of School will need to engage in strategic planning in these two areas.

The next Head of School will also engage an issue that is at once a challenge and an opportunity. That is, the head will need to move forward in diversifying both the faculty and the student body—in a discerning way that is clearly grounded in the school’s Christian-educational mission. This challenge-and-opportunity

should be an appealing one in the Orlando metropolitan area.

Given TCS’s above priorities, the next Head of School will need to commit to personal engagement in advancing the school’s development/fundraising efforts. Both annual and future capital giving initiatives will need the personal involvement and direction of the Head of School.

Apart from these expected challenges, for a mature and accomplished Christian educational leader, TCS presents an outstanding professional and personal opportunity. The next head will benefit from clear and appealing opportunities. The strong position of TCS in Orlando—a position of success, achievement, and growth—will welcome the next head of school, who will have the opportunity to build upon and guide a well-established and well-respected Christian independent school located in a dynamic metropolitan area.

Another decided opportunity will be that of coming into a school community that has already completed impressive strategic work by the Board of Trustees, the administration, and the faculty. The next head will be able to proceed in guiding the school to its next stage of development with a clearly articulated sense of the school’s mission, vision, and internal organization. Because of the strategic work already done, a professional Head of School will be able to provide creative and inspiring leadership for the school’s next phase.





QUALITIES & QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES

The headship of The Christ School presents an exceptional professional opportunity to a dynamic, experienced educational leader committed to independent-school education grounded in Biblical principles and faith. The ideal candidate will offer all or most of the following attributes:

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent academic credentials, including an advanced degree in a relevant field
- A record of success in teaching and administration, preferably including in Christian-independent schools (K-8 experience preferred but not required)
- An educational philosophy consistent with that of The Christ School
- A keen appreciation for the importance of the TK-8 grades in the developmental cycle of children
- Exceptional communication skills, including public speaking
- Ability and willingness to lead and participate in both internal and external development efforts
- Success in fundraising and cultivation of donors
- Strategic thinking and planning with follow-through and accountability
- Strong organizational-management skills
- Financial acumen

LEADERSHIP AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

- A committed Christian with mature and sustaining faith
- Ability and willingness to speak comfortably about her/his faith and how the Christian principles of the Christ School inform school programs, culture, and relationships
- A willingness to live out her/his faith in ways that reflect positively upon the school
- A servant leader who acts with humility and places a biblical worldview at the center of all decision-making
- An approachable, hands-on relationship-builder with exceptional interpersonal abilities who is skilled in team building and eager to engage all constituencies while being a decision-maker
- A confident, strategically minded visionary committed to all aspects of The Christ School's mission and is able to align all the school's programs and resources in a way that supports the vision and strategic goals
- A visible member of the local educational community with the ability to develop positive relationships with other school leaders and who understands educational Best Practices

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

- Demonstrate educational and spiritual leadership with faculty, students, and parents
- Continue building a strong sense of community and school culture while collaborating with stakeholders to lead the school into new and necessary changes as indicated in the strategic plan
- Continue to cast and to articulate a positive vision for the school
- Commit to personal engagement in the school's advancement and development efforts in both annual and capital initiatives

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & PROCESS

The Head of School position at The Christ School presents an outstanding professional opportunity for highly qualified candidates. The Christ School's Head of School search announcement can be viewed at thechristschool.org or by [clicking here](#).

Qualified applicants should send a letter-of-interest, current resume (with no time gaps), four references (which will not be checked until permission is granted), a statement of educational philosophy, and a statement articulating the applicant's personal Christian faith and practices. These documents should be sent as Word documents (.doc) or a PDF (pdf.) to the search consultant.

Application deadline is **October 28, 2016**.

To inquire, or to make a referral of a qualified candidate, please contact Jim Adare, CEO, Jim Adare Consulting LLC at **706.294.2889** or jim@jimadareconsulting.com.

The Christ School is an equal opportunity employer.





The Christ School

Centrally-Located Downtown Orlando Campus

Enrollment for 2016-2017: 372

- TK, Kindergarten: 53
- Lower School: 204
- Middle School: 115

2016-2017 Tuition:

- TK: \$8,744
- LS: \$10,246
- MS: \$10,865

Faculty: 51 full and part time
(does not include aftercare staff)

Operating Budget: \$3,855,147

Annual Giving: \$380,259

- Annual Fund: \$129,043
- Restricted Annual Fund Gifts \$2,500
- Grants: \$100,486
(includes a one-time grant for \$75,486)
- Mane Event: \$126,517
- Other Contributions: \$2,704
- One Great Day Sponsors: \$1,500

Financial Assistance: \$249,771

Students receiving financial assistance: 19%

Number of Trustees: 12

