



SOUTHERN TEACHERS AGENCY

Presbyterian School

Houston, Texas

www.pshouston.org

Lower School Head

July 2010



Presbyterian School

SCHOOL STATISTICS

- Number of students: 520
- Financial Aid Total: \$535K
- Students Receiving Financial Aid: 8%

THE SCHOOL

In 1986, Dr. John William Lancaster, Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, appointed a School Study Committee to explore the feasibility of an Early Childhood and Lower School at the church. Presbyterian School was officially founded in 1988 and opened its doors to offer a distinct educational program for families in the Houston area in the Fall of 1989. The school was founded on the vision that Family, School and Church should work together to educate and support children and their families.

From its earliest days, Presbyterian School set out to break new ground with a unique combination of elements: an outstanding faculty, a developmentally appropriate and innovative curriculum, a Christian environment, a parent education program designed to meet the needs of families, and state of the art, beautiful facilities. Most importantly, the school sought to kindle and nourish a love of learning in its students and to help them find new ways to discover their talents and use their potential to its fullest.

In 1997, following a detailed feasibility study, the school's Board of Trustees began planning a new facility for a Middle School. Construction on the Lancaster Center, named for Pastor Emeritus Dr. John Lancaster began in 1998. In August 2000, the Middle School opened with 60 students in fifth and sixth grades. In June 2003, the first class of eighth grade students graduated from Presbyterian School.

As the school continued to grow, the need for additional green space soon became apparent. Presbyterian School's Outdoor Education Campus (OEC), a 10-minute drive from the Main Street campus, opened in August 2006 and now serves students in areas of environmental learning, sports and athletics, nature trails, play areas and outdoor worship.

Through the years, Presbyterian School has grown from a young, innovative school dedicated to the earliest academic years into a dynamic and respected institution committed to excellence. Graduates of Presbyterian School are excelling in Houston's finest high schools and America's most prestigious colleges. More importantly, Presbyterian School students are good people and good citizens, interested in the world around them and eager to become leaders in it.

THE PLACE

One of the unique aspects of Presbyterian School is the fact that it is located on Main Street in Houston's bustling museum district. Houston was rated the best city in America in 2008 by Kiplinger, and it is not hard to see why. A strong economy, great restaurants, museums, entertainment including professional sports and renowned theaters, a light rail system, and affordable housing all combine to make Houston attractive to professionals, young families, retirees, and Fortune 500 companies alike. It is a great time to be in Houston, and Presbyterian School is in the heart of it all.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Head of the Lower School at Presbyterian School oversees the operation of all programs, including the curriculum and discipline, in the Alpha program (older two-year-olds) through the 4th grade, as well as matters and issues relating to the faculty and students of the division. This position promotes academic excellence and educational effectiveness in the faculty and academic programs of the Lower School. Major responsibilities include fostering a collegial working environment in the Lower School by providing energy and vision to programs related to faculty development, program development, assessment of student learning, enriched student learning opportunities, the use of technology for instruction, and academic collaboration between and among teachers in the Lower and Middle Schools. Cultivating and modeling positive and proactive relationships with parents is also a critical role within the culture of this division and Presbyterian School. This position reports directly to the Headmaster.

The new lower school head at Presbyterian will find a supportive and welcoming environment that has an eye to the future. The community at Presbyterian seeks and values friendliness but also vision, academic accomplishment and an appreciation for the arts. It wants an experienced educator who listens and communicates equally well and who understands the role of servant leader and who will be a pastoral presence on campus. Finally, it seeks someone willing to say, "Yes, let's try that," not "No, that's not how we do things here."

THE DESCRIPTION

- Oversees the development and implementation of the division's curriculum, which is child-centered, rooted in research of brain and cognitive development, has significant emphasis on the cultivation of critical and creative thinking skills, and is well-coordinated from one grade to the next.
- Meets regularly with teachers in the division (individually, by grade, and/or by subject) to assure that curricular discussion and development, as well as teaching methodology, are on-going topics of great significance and that teachers have the support, resources, and training they need.
- Plays the lead role in the attracting, retaining, and evaluating the highest quality faculty within the division.

- Develops a schedule tailored to the unique learning needs and programs of the division and handles various logistical matters essential to the smooth operation of the division.
- Develops meaningful relationships with faculty and students by being actively and visibly involved in the daily happenings within the division.
- Establishes disciplinary guidelines for the division and handles disciplinary matters for students in the division.
- Assures that a thorough process is in place that addresses the counseling needs of students in the division.
- Serves as the primary administrative link between the school and parents in the division.
- Serves on the Teaching and Learning Committee and Leadership Team.

THE LOWER SCHOOL HEAD

The ideal candidate will have the following experiences and/or qualifications:

- Has teaching and/or administrative experience within a grade(s) of the division.
- Has led a process of curricular evaluation and development.
- Has served in a leadership capacity among colleagues.
- Possesses a deep understanding and love for children of the age in the division.
- Possesses a special appreciation for the unique learning styles and development of children aged 2-10.
- Appreciates the distinctly Christian mission of Presbyterian School.
- Has earned an advanced degree.
- Possesses strong leadership and communication skills; is a team-player, a life-long learner, and comfortable with on-going improvement and change.

Review of applications will begin promptly. For most thorough consideration, interested applicants should submit by **February 1st** (preferably via e-mail) a Southern Teachers Agency application (available at www.SouthernTeachers.com), a letter of interest, a current resume, a list of references from the present and most recent supervisors, and educational philosophy to

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The new Lower School Head will assume duties July 1, 2010.