

CHRIST EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 – 2025

Letter from the Administration

Dear Christ Episcopal School Community and Friends,

We are thrilled to share with you our latest strategic plan, which we developed after reflecting on our re-accreditation process. Our school has been a cornerstone of the Nacogdoches community for over 75 years, and we are deeply committed to continuing to provide an exceptional education that nurtures our students' spiritual growth and character development.

To achieve this, our School Board revamped our strategic plan with the help of a Strategic Planning Task Force. They read books, participated in webinars, and compiled a survey for parents, teachers, and Vestry members. With the information collected, we created a strategic plan that encompasses all aspects of school life.

To ensure that our strategic plan remains relevant and effective, our School Board and Advisory Committee members have been reviewing and editing it annually for the past three years. Additionally, our Task Force members have been meeting regularly to complete action items and ensure that the plan is being implemented effectively.

Our strategic plan was compiled and completed with love, gratitude, hard work, devotion, and faith. We are grateful to the many representatives of the Christ Episcopal School family who contributed to this plan, and we appreciate their time, effort, knowledge, and expertise. With their help, we are confident that Christ Episcopal School will continue to provide an exceptional education and nurture students' spiritual growth and character development for years to come.

Sincerely,



Catherine Fenci Oliver
Head of School



Travis James Killen
Board of Trustees President

History of the School

In 1948, exactly one hundred years after the first Episcopal service was held in the Nacogdoches Courthouse on June 14, 1848, Christ Episcopal Day School was established by The Reverend Scott Field Bailey, rector of Christ Episcopal Church. Father Bailey and the parishioners of the century old church sought to devote attention to and dedicate an environment of learning for the children and youth of the congregation. Miss Lucette Alexander Sharp, was recruited by Father Bailey to serve as the first Coordinator of the first Protestant private school in Nacogdoches.

Lucette Sharp was well-suited for the job, having received her baccalaureate from Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College and her master's degree from the University of Wisconsin. With support of the parishioners, a kindergarten program was established and taught by Lucette, and soon thereafter a pre-kindergarten for four year olds and a first grade program were added. Miss Sharp loved teaching young children and was known as the teacher who always had a twinkle in her eye and was full of surprises. She taught from a rocking chair, never using a desk.

From 1964 to 1971, Mrs. E. Branch Patton (Florence Fitch) became Principal and first grade teacher, expanding the Day School to encompass two pre-kindergarten classes, two kindergarten classes, one first grade class and a newly added second grade class to the school.

In 1971, Mrs. John Ruckel (Deborah) became Coordinator of the Day School. Mrs. Ruckel added a third grade in 1973 and was responsible for harnessing accreditation for the Episcopal Day School of Nacogdoches, incorporated in 1974, by the Southern Association of Elementary and Secondary Schools. Grades four and five were added and Mrs. Bailey Nations (Frances) served as Coordinator from 1975 to 1978. Mrs. George Barham, III (Patsy) held the position of Coordinator from 1978 to 1981. Mrs. James Reese (Shirley) served as Principal from 1981 until her death in 1997. Grade six was added in the fall of 1989. Grade seven existed in 2000-2001 and in 2004-2005. Grade eight plans were discontinued. The last year the school had a sixth grade was in the school year 2017-2018.

Completing a self-study during the 1983-84 school year under the leadership of Mrs. Reese, the school became accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and became a member of both the National and Southwestern Associations of Episcopal Schools (NAES and SAES). In 1989, the school was accredited by SAES, after the state's education agency no longer accredited private schools, and assumed the name Christ Episcopal School (CES), incorporating as such in 1994.

Mr. Ralph Morgan became Headmaster in 1997. Headmistress Mrs. John Dahmus (Loretta) served 1998-2005; Headmistress Mrs. Sam Bass (Linda) served 2005-2008; and Head of School Mrs. Barry Russell



(Audrey) served 2008-2016.

Classes are now housed in two buildings: the main school building and the Reese Pre-School Building. The main school building houses kindergarten to grade 5, the library, the computer lab, a multi-purpose room (the Bailey Room), the art room, music room, administrative offices, and the School Hall, which is used for lunch and special events. The Reese Pre-School Building, across from the main building, houses the Pre-K programs.

Head of School, Mrs. John Lawrence Oliver, Jr. (Catherine Fenci) began in 2016 and serves currently. The school serves students in age 3 Pre-Kindergarten to grade 5, is accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools, and retains its membership in the National Association of Episcopal Schools and the Texas Private School Association. CES is a parish day school operating within the Diocese of Texas.

Christ Episcopal School will be celebrating its 75th birthday in June, 2023, along with Christ Church, which will be celebrating its 175th birthday. A joint celebration will take place with Bishop Andy Doyle conducting the church service for the congregation on June 11th.





Mission, Identity and Culture

Christ Episcopal School believes that to prepare students spiritually, academically, and in accordance with their God-given potential, thereby enabling them to handle the rigors of life with courage, we must continue to manifest our core beliefs and values.

Mission

Christ Episcopal School is a diverse community of learners who participate in an enriched academic program in a nurturing Christian environment which fosters a dedication to service to others and a love of lifetime learning.

Vision

Christ Episcopal School identifies its core beliefs and essential values in order to focus on the construction of clear and succinct ideals to define our school's purpose and future outlook. We strive to embody our school's mission to provide students with excellence in education and strength in character so that students will be spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially equipped to impact their community and the world for Christ.

Core Values

- Provide quality accredited academics
- Support ongoing professional development
- Endorse diversified service-learning
- Embody 21st century learning experience
- Celebrate and embrace change
- Champion character counts

Christ Episcopal School will review our mission statement annually to assure its policies, procedures, and programs fulfill the relevance of our mission and to confirm that our Episcopal identity continues to be defined as a welcoming community that strives to instill the importance of loving and serving others.

Action Items

- Define our relationship with SFA (Fine Arts, STEM, Student observers) and consider drafting a Memorandum of Understanding that defines these programs and establish a lead contact
- Explore professional development opportunities with SFA and other schools for CES faculty and guide teachers in instructional approaches that emphasize diverse and critical thinking, Episcopal identity and 21st century learning
- Develop more programs to provide students with a social ethic that fosters mutual respect and concern for community and will instill moral behaviors, values, and principles
- Create goals for service learning, track progress and hours completed
- Send letters to parents that define the service learning for the grade and follow up letters later in the school year
- Consider updating the Christ Episcopal School uniform



Governance, Finance and Administration

Christ Episcopal School is governed by standards and principals that are in accordance with the Southwestern Association of Episcopal School (SAES) accrediting agency. Policies and budgets set forth by the school will contribute to the school mission.

Core Values

- Fiscal responsibility
- Donor appreciation
- Stakeholder input
- Professional development
- Transparency

The school will improve with guidance and resources from SAES, the advisory committee and the Board of Trustees. The school and board will review SAES materials including webinars and accrediting documentation that is provided to the institution. The Advisory Committee will meet annually to review the strategic plan and recommend action items for the board to review.

Action Items

- Create a multi-year financial plan including major maintenance and capital expenses updated annually
- Review annually Documents in Adherence to Standards posted on SWAES.org
- Create a roles and responsibilities matrix and define who is responsible, accountable, consulted and informed
- Complete the implementation of a client relationship management program (CRM) that has ability to communicate with parents and stakeholders, streamline enrollment and manage payment options
- Task the Marketing Committee with creating, reviewing and updating an Enrollment Management Plan leveraging CRM and other marketing efforts
- Establish key performance indicators for measuring success of strategic plan and goals
- Consider website overhaul and create a marketing video for the school
- Define how our transparency works
 - Who are we transparent to?
 - What are we transparent about? (Finance/administration/governance)
 - Are Board minutes and financial statements available online?
- Consider paid internship positions for a teachers aid and office assistant
- Provide meaningful wage increases yearly to attract and retain faculty and staff
- Investigate benefits like health insurance for faculty and staff
- Mature process to apply for grants

Teaching and Learning

Christ Episcopal School, in a positive and caring Christian environment, will create and enable the culture, competence and conditions to ensure each student is prepared for meaningful learning through an enriched curriculum that promotes citizenship and respect in a diverse and rapidly changing world. Christ Episcopal School will be a school that highly values and supports excellence in teaching, successful student learning in and out of the classroom, and places an emphasis on family involvement that will result in strong, long lasting and meaningful relationships.

Core Values

- Caring
- Citizenship
- Fairness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Trustworthiness

Christ Episcopal School will focus our energy and resources on learning and teaching excellence. The Advisory Committee will meet annually to review the strategic plan and recommend action items for the Board of Trustees to review.

Action Items

- Teaching and learning task force should perform another curriculum review before the end of 2025
- Better define how core values are taught in the classroom
 - Create an infographic of core values/6 pillars of character to put in the classrooms
 - Have a month devoted to each of the 6 pillars
- Utilize our community, in all its facets, to provide rich resources for place-based learning. Examples: University resources (ie. Arboretum and Planetarium)
- Teach to the “whole child” with consideration for the age-appropriate intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual development of students is addressed
- Provide the faculty with adequate time, training on incorporating open ended discovery learning and 21st century thinking, materials/resources, including technology to develop and implement the curriculum
- Define funding mechanisms to provide with list items for teachers and classrooms, including items funded by parents and items funded by grants
- Create a list of professional development opportunities for teachers



Facilities and Safety

Christ Episcopal School believes in creating a safe, secure, and healthy learning environment where faculty, staff, and students can teach, work, learn, and grow. With education, regular inspections, and lots of practice, we hope to do our very best in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and crisis situations. We believe in providing a safe environment, responding to crises when they happen, and improving our systems when faced with new situations and challenges.

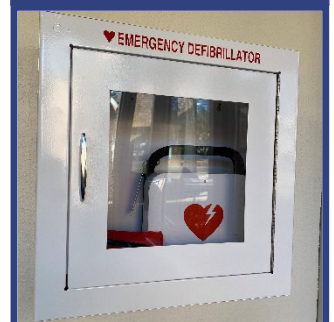
Core Values

- Safety
- Cleanliness
- Organization
- Record keeping
- Commitment

The school will pay close attention to make sure the proper actions take place regarding the maintenance of the interior and exterior of the buildings, as well the surrounding school grounds and the playground equipment.

Action Items

- Track compliance annually for the following in a chart and post in a viewable area
 - Fire Marshall inspection (Fire Marshall)
 - Emergency drills (Safety officer)
 - Defibrillators checked (4 year battery life) (Safety officer)
 - Grounds inspection (Vestry representative)
 - Emergency preparedness review (October) Safety officer)
 - CPR/AED/First Aid classes (February) (Third Party)
 - Other annual tasks
- Review and align with Facilities & Safety (section G) of Documents in Adherence to Standards posted on SWAES.org before 2025
- Budget for leveling out playground and adding mulch
- Place Carbon Monoxide detectors in the PreK building
- Ensure facilities and maintenance are budgeted correctly in multi-year financial plan
- Secure playground gates more effectively
- Budget to replace linoleum tiles
- Install commercial door closer between the administrative assistant and file room
- Develop a checklist for grounds inspection including playground maintenance
- Replace or repair cement steps on playground and install ADA accessible ramp
- Solve the standing water issue on west side of school building
- Add gutters and consider feeding water into cistern for gardens



Accomplishments

Christ Episcopal has achieved the following accomplishments as a direct impact of our strategic planning.

Mission, Identity and Culture:

- Adopt a CES Code of Conduct and Character that will govern what is acceptable and not acceptable
- Decide on a school mascot, school cheer, school song, and school motto that will strengthen and better define our identity
- Create a more robust service-learning program that involves students participating in service projects for local agencies that exist to effect positive change in the community
- Create a display to highlight each grades service learning project with photos, goal and achievements
- Display new logo on signs and posters

Governance, Finance and Administration:

- Better understand the true cost per student and how much we rely on donations
- Split External Affairs Committee into two committees where one is focused on marketing and one on fundraising development
- Create opportunities for end of life giving to endowment funds
- Increased Annual Giving by more than double using matching funds
- Create a marketing video for the school
- Complete selection of Client Relationship Management software (FACTS)

Facilities and Safety:

- Adhere to our Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Response Plan with annual reviews and updates when needed
- Request annual visits from the Nacogdoches Fire Marshall to review facilities and procedures
- Practice all four types of Emergency Management Drills on a regular basis
- Inspect the Automatic External Defibrillators annually, paying attention to four year battery life
- Schedule regular maintenance of the grounds regarding overgrown poison ivy and other foliage, as well as clearing fallen branches and leaves.
- Mitigate the erosion caused by the parking lot drainage swale into the main building playground Offer CPR/AED/First Aid classes every February to assure certification for faculty and staff members
- Completed installation of upgraded camera system

Teaching and Learning:

- Completed curriculum review that connects day to day and year to year learning opportunities
- Planted garden for hands on outdoor learning that connects to service projects
- Provide faculty with professional development opportunities to visit other schools and learn techniques for open ended discovery learning and 21st century thinking

Acknowledgements

The strategic plan is a collaborative effort with the Strategic Planning Task Force, Board of Trustees, the School Administration, the Advisory Committee and other members of the Christ Episcopal School Community.

Strategic Planning Task Force:

Travis Killen
Catherine Oliver
Sydney Register
Joe Shelkey
Alan Sowards

Facilities and Safety:

Lyle Brown
Bryan Davis, III
Bill Kennedy
Kim Newman
Sydney Register
Joe Shelkey

Governance, Finance and Administration:

George Barham
Sandi Hopson
Victor Lofgreen
Morgan Wallace
Travis Killen

Mission, Identity and Culture:

Ken Deppisch
Carrie Gilcrease
Jayme Hall
Carrie Killen
Amy Mehaffey
Catherine Oliver

Teaching and Learning:

Ashlie Ballard
Gina Carver
Jan Cobb
Holly Findeisen
Susie Kroll
Alan Sowards
Bonnie Stovall

Former members:

R.J. Bohac
Rev. Frank Hughes
Jeanne Perry
Nancy Tipton
Rev. Michael Caldwell
Susan Stoner
Jaime Anderson
Kelly Bateman
Vanessa Hancock

Kelley Summers
Patsy Barham
Pat Ellington
Lisa Kennedy
Susan Aikin
Kara Burch
Carol Stobart
Bonnie Stovall