



Educates minds, enriches hearts and expands horizons

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HEAD OF SCHOOL

JULY 2019



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## St. Anne's Episcopal School Preschool through Grade 8

St. Anne's Episcopal School is offering a unique and rare opportunity to become Head of School—only the sixth time in the school's nearly 70-year history this position has been open. Founded in 1950, St. Anne's is widely recognized as the premier lower and middle school in one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing cities in the U.S.: Denver, Colorado. The school is widely known for its strong academics and its students are actively sought after and acknowledged for continued success by leading high schools, both in the local community and throughout the U.S.

Embracing development of the whole child, the school has adopted a very rigorous curriculum that is focused not just on academics, but also on character development and creating robust opportunities in the arts as well as athletics. Additionally, the school exemplifies the outdoor lifestyle afforded by its Colorado surroundings, offering a range of outdoor educational opportunities, both on-campus and at St. Anne's in the Hills, a one-of-a-kind retreat in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, about 30 minutes from campus.

St. Anne's remains true to its founding values of the Sisters of the Order of St. Anne and works to preserve those values while adapting to an ever-changing world. As part of this mission, the school fosters a true sense of community and works tirelessly to find ways for its families to become part of the shared educational and development experience.

The Head of School, to start in July 2019, will lead a strong administrative team consisting of the Head of Middle School, Head of Lower School, Director of Admissions and Financial Aid, Director of Development, Business Director and Director of Technology. St. Anne's is accredited by the Association of Colorado Independent Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools and the National Association of Episcopal Schools.



## Our Beliefs

St. Anne's is committed to:

- Making decisions based on what is best for each child
- Honoring the history and traditions of the founding Sisters of St. Anne's and their Judeo-Christian values
- Welcoming and respecting all forms of diversity. St. Anne's is inclusive in human and spiritual terms
- Fostering a community of character, humility and kindness
- Surrounding children with outstanding, innovative and inspirational teachers who strive for academic excellence in a nurturing environment. St. Anne's recognizes the important role that each adult mentor plays in supporting each child's development
- Encouraging family participation in school and community activities. St. Anne's believes in serving the community in thought, word and deed
- Cultivating a safe, healthy and welcoming environment. St. Anne's preserves the beauty and serenity of the campus that embody the school's heritage

## History

St. Anne's has a long and interesting history, having evolved from a convent, to a convalescent home for children with polio, to the vibrant and highly regarded school it is today. The Sisters of the Order of St. Anne first came to Denver in 1929 from Boston and worked in a local Episcopal parish and treatment center before moving to their present location at 2701 South York Street. The former farmland that is now our campus was given to the Sisters in 1931 by the Junior League of Denver. Shortly thereafter, the Sisters were also given a 17-acre camp in the





Colorado foothills which now serves as St. Anne's in the Hills (SAITH)—an outdoor educational site that provides exciting opportunities for the ongoing augmentation of the student experience.

Initially founded as a convalescent home for children recovering from serious illness, the present St. Anne's Episcopal school was not started until 1950 with the opening of kindergarten and first grade. One influential Sister, Mother Irene, dedicated her life to the education of children and the future of St. Anne's Episcopal School. She is fondly remembered for her championship roses, quick wit and undying devotion to children. Her leadership and vision were instrumental in establishing a school with a special feeling of community, compassion and physical beauty—the fully realized vision that our faculty, staff, students and community continue to embody today.

The school continued to expand as additional grade levels were added, and in 1967 the school became incorporated with a full Board of Trustees to assist the Sisters in conducting school business. By December 1969, a classroom building had been completed to accommodate the school's growing student body.

Over the decades, the school has continued to grow and evolve, and has seen significant campus improvements over the last several years—including a new lower school building, outdoor classroom, plant operations center, dining hall/performing arts center, kitchen facility and outdoor amphitheater, as well as upgrades to SAITH facilities (scheduled for completion in spring of 2018). These facilities reflect our commitment to ongoing growth—not only in the school's enrollment, but also in our strengthening the quality of education offered at St. Anne's. At the same time, portions of the original farmhouse still remain, providing a connection to the school's history and a reminder of how far we have come.



## Community and Culture

The moment one steps across the threshold of St. Anne's idyllic and scenic campus, one is immediately immersed in the school's warm, welcoming community. For students, the school day begins with a personal greeting—a high-five or handshake and a heartfelt “good morning” from the Head of School before dashing off to their classrooms. Classroom visitors get to experience both the culture of the school and the character of our students, who confidently greet them and explain what they are doing in the class that day. New families are warmly welcomed into the community before the school year even begins, with mentor families offering support and new family events welcoming them into the fold. And for the entire community, past meets present as artwork and classroom work are on display across the campus and a “history hallway” documents the story and traditions of St. Anne's throughout the years.

Tradition is deeply valued at St. Anne's, both from the mission and legacy of the Sisters as well as their focus on service and character building, and many of our cherished traditions have roots in the school's origins. From the anticipated-by-all annual May Day celebration, to the Founder's Day traditions commemorating the Sisters' heritage of faith-filled and compassionate mission, to the jubilant nod to personal heritage that is Grandparents' Day, St. Anne's is dedicated to honoring the past—even as we stride confidently toward a bright future.

The school also adopts an annual theme—this year, it is “leading with empathy”—which informs school-wide efforts, from chapel, to communications, to the speakers and guests invited to campus. All of this is not to suggest that St. Anne's is locked in the past; rather, the proud traditions here serve as a stable bedrock upon which we continue to build and adapt to our ever-changing world, while always focusing on fostering the development of outstanding young global citizens.

Student connectivity and chapel are both viewed as key opportunities to further develop respectful and well-rounded children. Older students are matched with younger students to serve as “buddies.” The students love this tradition, as it encourages unique and unexpected friendships. Chapel is also a time to reinforce the Judeo-Christian roots of the school and foster



spiritual growth, providing an opportunity to educate and honor each other while teaching acceptance of different religious traditions.

Lastly, a key component of St. Anne's culture comes from the parents who recognize the humble nature of the school community. We are fortunate to have been able to cultivate an environment defined by passion, caring, commitment and inclusion that benefits everyone, from the students and faculty to the community at large. The school finds a place for everyone to fit in and contribute meaningfully, which fosters a true sense of belonging. Parents recognize the value of balancing rigorous academics with appreciation for athletics and the arts, all in a nurturing environment; they acknowledge the extraordinary work ethic of various constituent groups at the school who, they feel, plant the seeds for the values that inspire us.

With a steady increase in applications for the past several years, St. Anne's is generally considered to be the one of the most selective preschool through grade 8 schools in the Denver area. The school is focused on admitting candidate families that will share the unique values cherished by our community

## Program Highlights

The preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade model at St. Anne's allows for a consistent and nurturing experience from early childhood through early adolescence. Our [Preschool Program](#) is a magical experience for children ages 3–5. The program is designed to identify what skills are needed at appropriate age levels, with curriculum that is intentionally play-based while incorporating key developmental themes such as art and building. Teachers and families work together to create a culture that values childhood as a time to explore, create, wonder and be joyful. The multi-age environment allows children to grow through the experience at their own pace, while allowing the older students to help younger ones with self-regulation.



Unique to St. Anne's in the Denver area, the [Outdoor Education Program](#) is an experiential learning place for preschoolers and Kindergarteners in particular. This space encourages scientific exploration and artistic expression. For example, children can dig lakes and build dams with the water table and trough and use blocks and logs to build and sit upon.





Curriculum in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade ([Lower School Program](#)) continues the emphasis on student-centered learning with a rich and varied program, including strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. Differentiation in all three subjects begins in Kindergarten, and individual students are supported by staff learning specialists as needed. Additionally, the lower school is proud to be able to offer Spanish language instruction as well daily physical education. All of this increases student independence and capability, with the ultimate goal of ensuring a successful transition into middle school.



The [Middle School Program](#) students have a 7-day rotation that affords them the flexibility to engage in academic pursuits well as a variety of other character-building extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is intended to be very rigorous and has a reputation for providing tremendous academic preparation for high school. There are opportunities for acceleration in math and world languages, as well as chances to engage in activities outside the typical academic box—including innovation, design thinking and robotics.



Eighth graders are challenged to craft a self-reflective “This I Believe” essay, speech and podcast in Project 8, a weekly class geared towards introspection and rumination on the St. Anne’s experience and the world at large. Middle school students are physically active every day of the rotation, taking five classes of physical education and engaging in two periods of intramurals sports. Additional opportunities for authentic leadership also exist—include the chance to serve as tour guides for visiting families and mentor younger students on a variety of topics.



As a school founded by Episcopal Sisters, St. Anne’s is proud to continue their legacy of faith, character and service as integral components of campus life. St. Anne’s is a spiritually vibrant place, whose rich heritage is its beating heart. While the school was founded on, and remains committed to, Judeo-Christian beliefs, traditions and values, the school is open to families of all faiths, and our community is supportive of diversity and plurality. Spirituality

starts with the youngest children and grows in the middle school years as students learn about a variety of different faith traditions. Additionally, a dedicated focus on character education extends throughout each student's journey.

The entire student population is encouraged to participate in a variety of service-oriented activities, many spearheaded by the school chaplain. Lower school students participate in age-appropriate projects like nursing home visits and community mitten drives. Middle schoolers integrate service into their 7-day rotation, including off-campus visits with seniors, serving lunch to homeless and in-need citizens in the local community and tutoring students at local elementary schools and autism facilities. Lessons for this age group incorporate personal purpose—why we serve and how it benefits all.

St. Anne's also recently became an Ashoka Changemaker school, joining an exclusive network of leading schools that prioritize empathy, teamwork, leadership, and problem solving. The Changemakers club was born out of our Ashoka affiliation and has proven to be an exciting, nascent program for both lower and middle school students.

Lastly, St. Anne's is place for well-rounded children and is committed to developing a love of and appreciation for athletics and the arts. Our drama program is truly in a league of its own, producing full-length productions including musicals with original songs written by the St. Anne's drama faculty. Students are empowered to take on new roles, push themselves, and even co-write some of the materials. Team sports provide continual opportunities for students to master new skills, try new activities and learn priceless principles of teamwork that they will continue to apply throughout their lives. St. Anne's [Middle School Sports Program](#) offers an abundant choice of team sports, with 95% of middle school students playing at least one season, 70% playing two, and 45% participating in all three seasons.

## Governance

St. Anne's, as an independent school, is governed by a Board of Trustees. Currently, the Board consists of 19 members. Of the 19, 16 are parents and three are former parents.

The Trustees are dedicated to the mission of St. Anne's as well as to the school's continued success. The Board subscribes in full to the concept of staying "out of the weeds" on





## Board committees:

- Executive Committee
- Buildings and Grounds
- Finance
- Heritage
- Committee on Board of Trustees
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Development Committee
- Investment Committee
- Diversity Committee
- Compensation Committee

## St. Anne's by the Numbers

Enrollment: 426

Preschool:	31
Grades K-5:	261
Grades 6-8:	134

Average class size: 20

Student-Teacher ratio: 8:1

Percentage students of color: 22%

Faculty:	3 Preschool
	20 K-5
	13 6-8

Administrators: 7

Staff: 18

Percentage of faculty with advanced degrees: 45%

Tuition:

- Preschool, half-day: \$10,501
- Preschool, full-day: \$19,011
- Grades K-5: \$22,473
- Grades 6-8: \$23,653

Operating budget: \$9.7 million

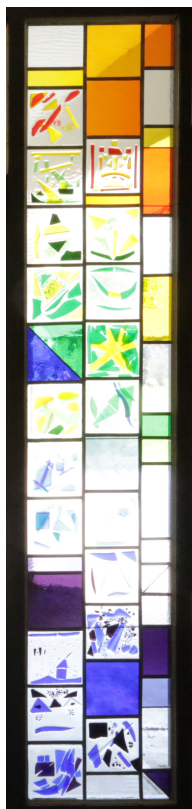
Endowment: \$21.6 million

Financial aid awarded: \$1.2 million  
in 2017-18

operational issues and instead allows the Head to lead the school as he or she sees fit.

The Board keeps a low profile at the school and spends the majority of its time focused on the financial stability and long-term strategic direction. Board terms for trustees are intentionally long (generally nine years) to provide stability, low turnover and consistent guidance. The new Head will find a strong, strategic and supportive Board with a great deal of expertise, one that will work with the Head in true partnership.





## The Leadership Opportunity

*May we be caring people. May we appreciate simplicity. May we be humble. May we have wit. May we love learning. May we love our fellow man and life itself. May we recognize the beauty of nature in the mountains, the trees, the flowers, and the beauty man himself can be.*

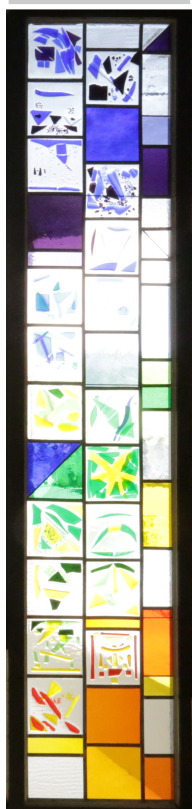
—John Comfort, Former Head of School

While St. Anne's has accomplished a great deal over the past several years, and is extremely proud of what we have built, we are excited for the fresh perspectives and new leadership vision that comes with any Head of School transition. In short: it is our intention to honor and preserve our traditions and legacy while being very open to new ideas to advance the school's mission, innovate the curriculum and embrace technology.

**Vision for the Future—**The Board and Head of School have worked diligently to ensure that St. Anne's continues to fulfill its mission. Given its strong foundation, the school is poised to think about what is next. The new Head, in collaboration with the Board and the school community, will have the opportunity to develop the new five-year strategic plan, one that balances a respect for tradition with a look toward the future. How will St. Anne's continue to thrive over the next five years and into the future?

**Community/Mission—**There is a strong sense of community and spirit that makes St. Anne's a special school. This unique aspect of St. Anne's is clearly the legacy of Mother Irene and her fellow Sisters. The Head of School, working with the Board of Trustees and the entire school community, must ensure that this spirit and identity remain a central part of the school. Maintaining the essence of the institution while imbuing it with an enhanced sense of purpose to provide for its meaningful implementation in today's world will be a key challenge and opportunity for the new leader. The new Head of School will be expected to actively connect with students, faculty, staff, families, alumni and the local community to understand the community and culture and help define the path forward.

**Pedagogical/Educational Vision—**As the educational leader, the Head will guide administrators and faculty in effective discussion and articulation of the pedagogical vision for the school, particularly in the context of St. Anne's mission for education, its academic rigor, the changing nature of today's students and evolving societal needs. Specifically, she/he will engage the faculty to define teaching excellence for St. Anne's that will continue to push the students to excel at the highest levels both at St. Anne's and when they continue their educational journey in high school and beyond. The Head of School will work collaboratively with the division heads and faculty through professional development and evaluation programs to ensure best practices for educating students while not losing sight of the character and value development that are relevant in today's world to help develop great kids.





Additionally, the Head, in collaboration with senior leadership and faculty, will develop the appropriate and relevant educational vision for St. Anne's. This vision will ensure that the program, systems and structures needed are in place to serve the needs of all students.

**Faculty/Administration**—St. Anne's benefits from a committed, dedicated, professional faculty and administration, many of whom have served the school for many years—and a handful of whom worked directly with Mother Irene. The Head will need to continue to effectively engage and mobilize this talent to carry out the mission of the school.

While there are many dedicated faculty and administrators who have served the school well for many years, some retirements are expected in the near future. Therefore, it is critical that the new Head, working in collaboration with the division heads, is attentive to seizing the school's opportunity to attract the best and brightest faculty and administrators and empowering them to use their expertise to move the school forward, while helping them to embrace what it means to be a St. Anne's educator. In addition, the new Head of School will have an opportunity to evaluate the administrative configuration and support systems to ensure that St. Anne's has a structure that is appropriate for a preschool through grade 8 institution, one that allows for the effective implementation of the programmatic goals to serve the needs of all students and the school.

**Diversity**—St. Anne's is truly committed to diversity and there is opportunity to build upon this commitment to ensure that the school's **Diversity and Inclusion Vision** is fully realized. As part of this, the Board has created a diversity sub-committee of the Board - One St. Anne's. Steeped in the history of St. Anne's as a welcoming place for all, One St. Anne's seeks to foster a



unified community consisting of many interesting and diverse components, all of which have a meaningful, valued voice and a stake in enriching and enlivening St. Anne's. Composed of parents, faculty and the Head of School, the committee dedicates itself to the development of vibrant and engaging programs and events for the broader community, including breakfasts, book series and guest speakers. The new Head of School will have the opportunity to further refine and advance the school's diversity objectives.

## The Ideal Candidate Attributes and Experiences

St. Anne's Head of School will be an innovative and energetic educator and strong school community leader. The Head will have significant leadership experience and skills, along with a steadfast resolve to hold the history, purpose and founding principles of St. Anne's Episcopal School's mission and philosophy while innovating for the future. The successful candidate should possess significant and successful executive leadership and management experience, including the ability to:

- Be a visible presence in all facets of school life. St. Anne's Head of School position is a heavy community-facing position and requires a strong and active presence.
- Develop and deliver on a clear educational vision and speak clearly about the school's identity.
- Be an educational thought leader and strategic thinker.
- Lead a student-centered academic program, which includes recruiting and developing a talented faculty.
- Work closely and collaboratively with the administration, faculty, staff and trustees to build a true partnership for the school.
- Engage with and support a comprehensive external affairs program, including being a partner in fundraising and continuing to represent the school in the greater Denver community.

## Candidates should possess:

- Excellent oral and written communication skills in a variety of settings, with a variety of constituent groups.
- Ease in engaging with and forging relationships with multiple stakeholder groups.
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills with exceptional follow-up.
- A commitment to diversity, multiculturalism and globalism, with the desire and skill to work with a diverse community in a meaningful and genuine manner.
- The fundamentals of business and the economics of running a school.

St. Anne's will be best matched with an accomplished educational leader who is an unrelenting believer in student growth, development and learning, and who is passionate about education from early childhood to middle school.

The Head of School should be a reflective and spiritual individual. The ideal candidate is also someone who is nimble, appreciates and demonstrates good humor and who is empathetic and humble. Most importantly, the new leader, according to students, must be "open-minded, not scary and love kids."

## The Search Process

The new Head of School will assume the position on July 1, 2019. The school has appointed a Search Committee to conduct the search and has engaged Educational Directions, a national executive search firm, to assist the committee.

Please direct all inquiries, application materials and nominations in confidence to:

Dr. Mathew Heersche ([mheersche@edu-directions.com](mailto:mheersche@edu-directions.com))

Risa Oganessoff Heersche ([rheersche@edu-directions.com](mailto:rheersche@edu-directions.com))

Candidates should express their interest and begin the application process as soon as possible, but not before speaking with the consultants.

Each candidate must submit:

- A targeted letter explaining his/her interest in the Head of School position at St. Anne's Episcopal School
- A resume
- An educational statement
- The names, email addresses, and telephone numbers of five professional references who can be contacted by the consultants
- Two reference letters sent directly to Mathew Heersche or Risa Oganessoff Heersche

Electronic submission of credentials in a combined PDF format is expected.

