

## St. John's Episcopal School Director of Finance

*The Head of School seeks an experienced finance professional to manage all financial workflows and systems for a top southern California Episcopal Church-affiliated school dedicated to spiritually informed education for children from 8 weeks to grade 8.*

*Responsibilities include planning & budgeting, accounting & bookkeeping, reporting & controls, contracting & legal, payroll processing and project accounting functions.*

### **BACKGROUND**

Established in 1988 and grounded in the rich history of diversity and excellence in Episcopal education, St. John's fosters every child's full intellectual, physical and spiritual development in a nurturing learning environment through programs built on a balance of tradition and innovation.

The school provides a world-class STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) education within a faith-based culture that combines academic rigor with individualized instruction and meaningful character development. St. John's is a member of the National Association of Episcopal Schools, the National Association of Independent Schools, and is a fully accredited member of the California Association of Independent Schools and the National Association of the Education of Young Children. Each student (or Cardinal, the school's mascot) is known and valued for who they are, helped toward developing a sense of belonging, and encouraged to pursue lives of service and purpose.

The school is located in Rancho Santa Margarita (Orange County) about 40 miles southeast of Los Angeles. St. John's serves 480 students annually along with their families, has a balanced budget of about \$9M that generates a modest surplus, with 100 faculty and staff. Finances are responsibly managed, meaning that planning and budgeting processes are straightforward and there are strong controls in place to monitor actual expenses against plan. Multi-year investments in facilities, new programs and educational technology are undertaken with a strong focus on financial sustainability and are linked to funding so that embedded annual costs required to run the school on a sustained basis do outpace revenue.

The organization as a whole has a lean infrastructure that must remain strong to ensure that services are continually upgraded. The Director of Finance must have a solid, practical understanding of budgeting, accounting and controls workflows. A desire to be associated with an organization centered in faith is important, and some experience with the financial oversight and management practices of a church would be advantageous.

### **BASIC FUNCTION**

Reporting to the Head of School, the Director of Finance is responsible for all future planning and day-to-day functioning of the organization's: planning, budgeting and forecasting; financial accounting, management, controls, analysis and reporting; revenue/expense/cash management (including receivables, payroll and payables); banking, auditor and legal counsel relationships; contracts and grant compliance and revenue recognition; and finance software, data security, support workflows and operating infrastructure.

The Director of Finance will collaborate with, and be a thought partner to, the Head of School and an experienced, professional, motivated Management Team. Under the direction of the

Head of School, the Director of Finance will also interact with the Bishop's Committee and its School Committee, which together have governance oversight over the school. The Director of Finance position, therefore, requires a hands-on individual with strong business acumen who will personally grapple with and resolve issues in real time while being both transparent and sensitive to oversight dynamics. The Director of Finance should have a growth and innovation mindset but be grounded in pragmatism, and serve as advisor and implementer on school financial planning, policies, procedures, practices, reporting and day-to-day management.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES:

- Quickly get to know St. John's Episcopal School – its people, culture, constituents, funding, programs, and current and future operational needs.
- Establish strong working relationships and a sense of trust with the Head of School, the Vicar of the Church & School, the Chair of the School Committee, the Chair of the School Finance Committee, other oversight committee members, colleagues and direct reports; strengthen and sustain a culture of transparency, collaboration, communication, teamwork and integrity.
- Understand and manage internal systems and controls, operations, processes and financial procedures to ensure the integrity of the financial information and reporting.

### FINANCE & ACCOUNTING:

- Review, streamline and make transparent St. John's financial apparatus; review and periodically update the chart of accounts, current accounting systems and control procedures, audit trails, financial documentation and workflows; ensure infrastructure that allows for the flexibility required for growth.
- Ensure that actual expenditures are in alignment with budget plans; work with all departments to manage and control spending; forecast and manage cash flow to ensure that cash on hand is adequate to meet obligations and future needs.
- Oversee reporting for contracts; tax matters; delivery of financial reports to the Head of School, the School Committee and the Bishop's Committee; coordinate compliance matters, including all school, diocesan, federal, state, and local procedures or regulations, periodic or annual audit, the relationship with outside auditors, and be part of the team and assures accreditation of the school with various associations.
- Collect and record earned & contributed revenue in an orderly way; manage monthly and annual general accounting close and financial reporting; administer all payroll and benefits systems to ensure accurate and timely distribution of funds; administer financial relationships with partners and vendors that provide services to St. John's or for whom St. John's provides services; cultivate and manage banking relationships and debt and bond covenant compliance; adhere to GAAP principals; facilitate and coordinate audit activities.
- Provide responsible oversight of contract management activities, accurately allocate direct and indirect costs, negotiate contracts and assure contract compliance, etc.
- Provide accurate, timely and succinct information on the financial status of all school departments and functions to the Head of School; safeguard the financial value of

school assets; develop long- and short-range financial plans and prepare accurate and timely financial and operating reports.

**OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Lead the budgeting process, including the framework for budget preparation, reporting and variance analysis; create forecasts and other financial tools to support the development of philanthropic support and in reviewing programs from a financial perspective.
- Proactively provide leadership and guidance to the organization, and specifically, provide expertise in all financial matters, making clear the financial implications of pending decisions, investments, system and ed-tech upgrades and capital projects. In partnership with the Director of Facilities and Director of Information Technology, manage funds and contracts to maintain and enhance campus physical plant, including facilities and technology reserves, including appropriate amounts in the annual budget.
- Oversee the annual financial aid application process, and serve as a member of the Financial Aid Committee charged with making the annual financial aid award decisions. In partnership with the Admissions Office, oversee the preparation of annual enrollment agreements, tuition refund program, and other contractual obligations with families and community members.
- Organization-wide, provide orientation and training to new staff and board members, and ongoing support to those with fiscal and budgetary oversight.
- Serve as the fiscal liaison and maintain positive relationships with parents, funders, auditors, attorneys, vendors, current and potential partners, and other individuals, families and organizations transacting business with St John's Episcopal School.
- Be responsible for all treasury functions, including managing cash and investment management; engage in cost analysis and risk management activities; evaluate investments and projects; evaluate capital expenditures that modernize St. John's' productivity and ultimately reduce overhead expenses.
- Ensure that the organization's finance systems and data are secure and backed up.
- Oversee payroll process, including design, timely calculation, and accurate payment of employee salary, incentives and other forms of financial recognition for their work.

**IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS**

Candidates should have the following experience and qualifications:

- Ten+ years' experience of senior leadership charged with financial oversight and management in the nonprofit, public or business sector, and with an organization at least of a comparable scale.
- Experience in or knowledge of nonprofit accounting, including contract and grant accounting and revenue recognition issues; knowledge, experience and application of GAAP; background in managing general accounting, budgeting and planning, procedures and controls, and analysis and reporting; a degree in accounting or business is preferred, and CPA is advantageous.
- A desire to be associated with an organization centered in faith is important, and some experience with the financial oversight and management practices of a church would be valuable.

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- Excellent communication skills, both verbally and in writing; ability to convey complex financial information in a concise and engaging way and willingness to translate financial and accounting knowledge to all staff levels.
- A team player with the maturity to focus on effective and practical action; a person with integrity who is able to deliver both good and bad news and is able to solve problems; organized, reliable, consistent, extremely ethical.
- Passion and an aptitude in big picture strategy as well as rolling up your sleeves to get into the details of fiscal and administrative operations.
- A sense of humor and perspective.

For more information please contact:

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