Head of School
Ascension Episcopal School
Lafayette, Louisiana
July 2023 • ascensionbluegators.org

The Opportunity

Ascension Episcopal School in Lafayette, Louisiana, seeks a Head of School to lead a community of PK-12th grade students and their teachers, commencing July 1, 2023. Recognized locally as one of the finest parish day schools in the area, Ascension is an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension.

Celebrating over 60 years of academic excellence, Ascension is the largest Episcopal school in the Diocese of Western Louisiana and draws students from a 30-mile radius covering 19 cities in five south Louisiana parishes. Through regular chapel services and religious instruction, Ascension provides opportunities for all students to grow spiritually and to become young men and women of faith and character.

Ascension Episcopal School is committed to educational excellence in a Christian environment.

The next Head of School will inherit a state-of-the-art institution that is poised for continued growth and success. Building upon the significant accomplishments of the past decade, the successful candidate must enthusiastically support Ascension’s mission of educational excellence in a Christian environment and be committed to that mission in all aspects of the school’s daily operations.

Ascension’s Head is expected to be the inspirational leader of the school—broadly informed about academic matters and possessing both a moral and an educational vision to take the school forward in the 21st century. The Head of School reports to Ascension’s School Board—a diverse group of parents, educators, and other professionals who support the Administration’s oversight of all academic, extracurricular, enrollment, and personnel matters, as well as management of the school budget, external relations, and fundraising.

Lafayette is Louisiana’s fifth-most populous city—a major economic center with a highly educated workforce, an unmatched quality of life, and regional leadership in manufacturing, retail, medical services, technology, and education. Situated between New Orleans and Houston, 50 miles west of Baton Rouge and 25 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico, Lafayette is in the heart of Acadiana, an area named for the hard-working, fun-loving Acadian people ("Cajuns") who were exiled from their homeland in Nova Scotia in the 18th century. Acadiana is a unique cultural area that values family, faith, and friends; its legendary joie de vivre and Cajun and Creole cultures are well-known around the globe. The area houses five major medical centers, and the state’s second-largest university serves as a major research center for the area.

Ascension Episcopal School is an Episcopal, coeducational, parish day school serving over 600 students in prekindergarten through 12th grade.

To Apply

Please complete the online Application to become a Southern Teachers Candidate and submit a resume and cover letter explaining your interest in and qualifications for this position. Contact Jamie Estes at jamie.estes@southernteachers.com with questions.
The primary task of Ascension's Head of School is to provide leadership for all constituencies and in all aspects of the school's programs. Effective leadership will be achieved through the accomplishment of the following goals, designed to accomplish the school's mission of providing educational excellence in a Christian environment.

The Christian Environment
- Lead and model integration of the school's mission and Episcopal identity throughout all programs and campuses.
- Establish an "Ascension culture" that offers unique, mission-based opportunities to all students.
- Develop and maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Rector of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension.
- Discern issues bearing impact upon ecclesiastical matters that require consultation with the Rector.

Balanced Excellence
- Continue Ascension's tradition of balanced excellence, striving for eminence in all areas of the school's program.
- Provide diverse opportunities for all students to explore a balance of experiences in academics, athletics, arts, and acts of service.

Academic Rigor
- Attract outstanding teachers by offering competitive salaries and benefits and adding new positions as needed for program development and to retain appropriate student-teacher ratios.
- Maintain Ascension's commitment to educational excellence by leading faculty in the development of programs to enhance academic rigor, addressing individual student abilities and needs where appropriate.
- Encourage professional development and advanced degree programs for teachers and administrators.
- Model current best practices in all academic areas.
- Ensure curricular, administrative, and mission-related alignment across all three of Ascension's campuses.

Management
- Ensure that teachers, faculty, and staff employ best practices in all areas of business, operations, marketing, communications, admissions, and development.
- Refine the school's administrative hierarchy to clarify the goals and responsibilities of each faculty and staff position.
- Maintain an effective working relationship with the School Board and the Rector.
- Require and model enforcement of all Board and school policies.
- Foster effective relationships and an environment of trust and confidence to maximize the potential for open communication among all constituencies.

Advancement
- Lead in the development and implementation of marketing, communications, admissions, and fundraising plans designed to maintain steady enrollment and retention, to increase diversity, and to sustain financial strength.
- Identify enrollment numbers that align with the school's mission and capacity.
- Enhance efforts to increase student diversity through tuition remission and recruitment programs.
- Strengthen induction and retention efforts to increase enrollment stability.
- Provide leadership in developing fundraising strategies and programs to phase in the implementation of the school's Campus Master Plan.
- Oversee allocation and use of resources and fundraising efforts.

Community Relations
- Cultivate and maintain strong interpersonal relationships with students, parents, faculty, and staff.
- Integrate south Louisiana's unique history and cultural traditions into the school's curricula and daily life.
The Position

The Head of School is the sole employee of the Ascension School Board. Qualifications include the following:

Professional Qualifications

- Master's degree or higher, preferably with specialized training in educational leadership
- At least 5 years of classroom teaching experience, including grades 7-12
- At least 3 years of experience in PK-12 school administration
- Demonstrated ability to lead collaboratively and delegate authority
- Proven ability in hiring, management, and evaluation of qualified personnel
- Successful experience with fundraising and financial management
- Ability to use technology and infuse current techniques into the academic program
- Outstanding history of student enrollment and retention

Christian Commitment

- High ethical and moral standards, a role model for students, faculty, and staff
- Dedication to Episcopal education that reflects our orthodox Anglican heritage
- Demonstrated commitment to the integration of Christian faith tenets into academics, the arts, and athletics
- Dedication to fostering the mission of the school and its role in the parish church
- Commitment to the school as a ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, including communication with the Rector and consultation regarding any school matters that may affect the parish and its outreach

Personal and Professional Qualities

- A holistic philosophy of education that supports Ascension's goal of balanced excellence
- Articulate communicator with effective verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills
- Respect for all constituents; accessibility and ability to work well with diverse populations
The Position (continued)

- Visionary; innovative, creative thinker
- Engaging, friendly personality; confident, outgoing, positive attitude
- Good listener, inclusive of others; good rapport with faculty, students, and parents
- Passion for educational excellence; genuine concern for and love of children
- Effective problem-solving, conflict resolution, and decision-making skills; courage in the face of adversity
- Ability to plan strategically and achieve goals
- Expertise in curricular/academic leadership
- Adherence to high academic standards
- Academic and emotional intelligence
- Empathetic towards and understanding of modern challenges students face
- Fairness and objectivity in dealing with faculty, staff, and students
- Faculty advocate/mentor who inspires and respects teachers
- Excellent team builder; ability to build consensus
- Visible involvement in the life of the school throughout all three campuses
- Ability to create and effectively manage an efficient inter-campus infrastructure

The School

Ascension Episcopal School began life as Ascension Day School, an outreach ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Lafayette, Louisiana. With the support of The Rev. David J. Coughlin, then Rector of Ascension Parish, and several dedicated parishioners and professionals, the school opened in the fall of 1959 with a kindergarten class of 17 children. The school completed its first educational building in 1961, and new grades were added until 1966 when Ascension became a PK-6 school.

In 2005, the school dedicated a middle school building on its main campus, and in 2009, the school opened an Upper School Campus in Youngsville. In 2008, the school changed its name from Ascension Day School to Ascension Episcopal School in order to better reflect its new educational mission and capacity to educate students from preschool through grade 12. Ascension has set high standards since its 1959 founding with its constant commitment to educational excellence in a Christian environment. Today that commitment remains strong, and the school provides an education unsurpassed in south Louisiana.

Above all else, Ascension is committed to educational excellence in a Christian environment wherein students discover their potential, develop their unique, God-given gifts, and are shaped into men and women of character, so that they may know the Truth, love the Good, and serve God and neighbor. Students receive a balanced liberal arts education, complete with diverse opportunities for the whole child in academics, athletics, arts, and acts of service. Moreover, as a Christian school where God is celebrated at the center of Life, Ascension welcomes all as God’s children who are called

School Prayer

O Heavenly Father, who has given us Thy Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and friend: help us to understand His friendship, and to do such things that will please Him. Bless us in our work and our play. Make us gentle, generous, truthful, kind and brave. Keep us in purity of heart, and let the life of our school go on from strength to strength and have its place and meaning in Thy Kingdom: all of which we ask through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.
The School (continued)

to model the life of Jesus, the source of grace and truth. To that end, Ascension provides diverse opportunities for all students to grow spiritually. Regular worship services and Christian Education classes encourage students to deepen their relationship with God.

Though Ascension has grown to three campuses, it still functions as a parish day school while simultaneously incorporating qualities offered by the finest independent schools. Comparatively small classes and low student-teacher ratios allow for a nurturing environment and individualized programs in which students of varied abilities can grow and succeed. Ascension values students’ home/school connection, and teachers and administrators strongly encourage parental support throughout the school.

Ascension proudly reflects the values and culture of South Louisiana, where the love of family, faith traditions, and celebrating the “joie de vivre” (joy of life) are evident in every aspect of school and community life.

Ascension is self-supporting and operates with its own budget. It is approved by the Louisiana Department of Education and accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools and the Southern Association of Independent Schools. Ascension is the largest Episcopal school in the Diocese of Western Louisiana and draws students from a 30-mile radius covering 19 cities in five south Louisiana parishes. The school has been listed as a National Blue Ribbon School since 2004 and as an Apple Distinguished School since 2013.

Ascension’s primary source of income is its tuition and fees. The annual budget includes a generous allocation to provide tuition assistance to eligible students on the basis of financial need. However, the school bridges the gap between tuition and annual expenses through four main entities: the Annual Fund, fundraisers and membership drives, a small state allocation, and a modest operating revenue. The school created the Annual Fund to support programs of balanced excellence, facilities, maintenance and special projects, professional development, and financial stewardship. For the past three years, the Annual Fund has collected an average of $160,000 a year. Additionally, the three Parent Support Organizations (Parent Teacher Organization, Fine Arts Alliance, and Athletic Booster Club) conduct fundraisers, and recent changes have improved donor relationships and reduced philanthropic fatigue. Ascension’s total current indebtedness is $326,935.

The school has made great strides over the past two years in building and maintaining its advancement efforts.

Grades Served: PK3-12
Total Enrollment: 699
Preschool Enrollment (PK-K): 84
LS Enrollment (1-4): 163
MS Enrollment (5-7): 135
US Enrollment (8-12): 317
Student Diversity: 9.9%
Total Instructional Faculty: 93
Foreign Language Options: 3
AP Courses: 13
Average Class Size: 16
Student/Faculty Ratio: 6:1
Mean SAT: 1155
Highest Tuition: $17,200
Number of Board Members: 14
Accreditations: SAIS and SAES
Most Recent Accreditation: 2018

The staff currently includes an Associate Head of School for External Affairs, a Director of Admissions, Director of Communications, Director of Development and Alumni, and a Director of Marketing and Branding.

Because teachers are a priority for institutional stability and growth, Ascension offers competitive salaries and benefits. Salaries are, on average, within 10% of those for area public schools. The school offers a robust retirement plan and pays 70% of the employee health premiums. The school provides exemplary support for faculty participation in professional development activities and pursuit of advanced degrees, with an average annual allocation of $500 per faculty member and reimbursement of up to $3,000 for advanced studies budgeted for this purpose.

Ascension offers a generous program of tuition assistance for faculty, staff, and parishioners of Ascension Church. Tuition assistance grants totaled $522,438 for this past school year. The school granted student aid to 11% of the students, with an overall average grant of $6,000. Faculty and staff also receive a 50% discount for school trips, camps, and registration fees and are exempt from all athletic fees.
The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension is dedicated to its Anglican heritage and identity. The church's worship is centered around God's gracious gift of Himself in Christ and celebrated through the sacraments. The church community is evangelical and takes seriously Jesus' call to obedience, holding the Holy Scriptures to be authoritative in their lives and believing them to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Parish leaders describe themselves as orthodox and read the Scriptures through the eyes of the historic Church, adhering to the ancient Creeds as guideposts for belief and worship. The congregation includes over 700 members and 250 families.

One School, Three Campuses

Ascension's evolution into a full PK3 through 12th-grade school necessitated physical expansion. Although separation by grade levels can present logistics challenges, Campus Directors from Ascension's three campuses effectively coordinate the alignment of the academic, arts, and athletic programs under the direction of the Head of School and the Academic Dean.

The 2.5-acre Preschool campus, located in River Ranch, a Traditional Neighborhood Development within the city limits of Lafayette, opened in 2004 with 10 classrooms, a music room, a library, a multi-purpose activity center, an Innovation Lab, and a playground designed specifically for young children. The Preschool houses students from age 3 through kindergarten. This is a warm, friendly environment for the youngest students, bursting with life and laughter.

The seven-acre main campus, which serves the lower and middle school grades (1-4 and 5-7), sits within walking distance of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in the downtown area of the city. The Downtown Campus features a new Fine Arts Annex building containing a Technology Lab, a media room, and a print library. Parker Hall, which opened in spring 2005, contains classrooms and a science lab for grades 5-7. An innovative multi-purpose activity center offers an elevated running track, a stage for performances, and classrooms for music and art.

In 2006, 72 acres of land were donated to the school in the expanding planned community of Sugar Mill Pond, 11 miles from the Downtown Campus. The Upper School Campus has ample area for a beautiful college-like environment, complete with all requisite educational buildings, athletic facilities, practice fields, and parking. The Upper School Campus, which opened in 2008, houses grades 8-12. Stuller Hall, the main classroom building, occupies over 39,000 square feet and contains makerspaces, science lab, computer labs, seminar rooms, a black box theatre, and an entire wing dedicated to visual arts. In 2018, the School Board and Vestry approved a Master Plan with a long term goal to continue to expand and improve the facilities of all three campuses.

Episcopal Identity

As embodiments of the Christian faith, Episcopal schools are created to be communities that honor, celebrate, and worship God as the center of life. They are created to be models of God's love and grace.

They are created to serve God in Christ in all persons, regardless of origin, background, ability, or religion.

They are created to “strive for justice and peace among all people and to respect the dignity of every human being.” These principles are the basis on which identity and vocation are to be defined in Episcopal schools.
Academics
The Ascension curriculum aims to develop lifelong learning skills within a strong academic program that prepares graduates for college and beyond. At each grade level, Ascension maintains developmentally appropriate goals while recognizing the need to meet the varying abilities, formative stages, and learning styles in any given class. Technology supports classroom instruction and extends student learning through meaningful projects.

Ascension's teachers emphasize creative and critical thinking skills in an environment of supportive learning. Small class sizes and low student-teacher ratios allow for an intimate, interpersonal atmosphere to maximize each student's potential.

The Preschool offers a safe, nurturing, child-friendly environment where students can begin a lifetime of learning. Preschool students primarily engage in active learning activities through exploration. The Lower School recognizes and values the acquisition of basic skills as a foundation for educational excellence. Once students master concrete thinking skills, teachers guide them to the next level of learning--higher order thinking. As they progress, teachers encourage Lower School students to apply their newfound skills, analyze and evaluate information, and synthesize data. Teachers design projects and activities that follow and complement units of instruction to promote the application of skills and understanding and foster peer group interaction. By offering increased responsibility and high academic expectations within a supportive environment, the Middle School program continues the process of helping students define their roles in their families, school, and community. Middle school students progress from a teacher-guided model of instruction to independent critical analysis.

The Upper School is firmly grounded in the school's mission to provide educational excellence in a Christian environment. Teachers and administrators foster the continuing development of young adults with the qualities prayed for daily in the school prayer: gentleness, generosity, truthfulness, kindness, and bravery. Through a highly interactive, technology-enhanced, and standards-based curriculum, Ascension's Upper School students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to compete successfully in postsecondary institutions and as productive members of society.

The Upper School's core curriculum meets the needs of students at the Ascension Standard, Accelerated, and Advanced Placement levels. As students progress through the curriculum, they choose electives ranging from Advanced Placement, Accelerated, and STEM courses to courses designed to develop an appreciation for the fine and performing arts. Ascension's graduation requirements significantly exceed the minimum requirements set forth by Louisiana's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition to four units each of English, mathematics, science, and social studies, Ascension Upper School students must complete three units in one foreign language, one unit in theology, two units in health/physical education, and two units in the fine arts, for a total of 24 units. In addition, each student must complete a minimum of 15 hours of community service each year, totaling at least 60 hours over four years.

Students with a special aptitude for mathematics and science have an excellent selection of coursework from which they may choose to complete their graduation requirements. Ascension Standard, Accelerated, and Advanced Placement courses are offered in a variety of STEM disciplines.

For students whose primary interests lie in the humanities, Ascension offers Ascension Standard, Accelerated, and Advanced Placement courses in English, the social sciences and history, and elective courses in journalism, personal finance, and philosophy. Students have the option to take dual enrollment courses through the University of Louisiana.
at Lafayette. Students who wish to exceed graduation requirements may also take four years of French and Spanish, three years of theology, an elective course in ethics/philosophy, and/or an elective technology course in media design.

Technology

Ascension Episcopal School's Technology Program strives to establish an innovative, collaborative learning environment that fosters empowered lifelong learners, creative problem solvers, and critical thinkers. As adaptable technology users, students and teachers responsibly communicate and contribute their God-given gifts in a global context.

Technological instruction begins in the Preschool, where children use computers under supervision in their classrooms and iPads within classroom learning centers during small group instruction. Lower School students then use class sets of iPads for teacher-supervised activities in mathematics, science, reading, and the arts during the academic rotation of centers. This early and safe exposure to technology enhances Ascension's hands-on, teacher-driven curriculum.

At the Middle School level, students utilize 1:1 iPads and computer labs to pursue Web design, desktop publishing, introductory computer programming, and robotics. Additional electives and self-directed studies provide more advanced opportunities in computer science, video production, digital photography, and graphic design for Upper School students in a 1:1 laptop environment. In 2013, Ascension was named an Apple Distinguished Technology School in recognition of its exceptional and innovative use of technology in the classroom.

The three Ascension campuses are designed to offer an educational environment that works best for each student. Rolling desks, interactive TVs, whiteboard tables, and workstations for students are a few examples of Ascension's innovative learning spaces. Each of the three campuses has an innovation lab dedicated to enhancing its curriculum. The labs utilize technology and learning tools appropriate for the age of the students. In collaborative, learner-centered spaces, students experience authentic, hands-on learning experiences through a balanced approach to technology.

Modern Languages

In keeping with the area’s strong French and Acadian influence, Ascension places significant emphasis on French language skills. In grades 1-4, students learn about French culture, and teachers introduce the first stages of language through hands-on and physical activities. First graders receive weekly Spanish lessons, and students in grades 2-4 participate in a seven-day enrichment rotation that includes Spanish, as well as art, computer lab, library, Christian education, and music.

Middle and Upper School students may choose either French or Spanish to fulfill their modern language requirement. At this level, students refine their listening, reading, writing, and grammar skills. Upper School students are required to earn three credits in the same language prior to graduation, and Advanced Placement
The School (continued)

options are available in both French and Spanish. French students also have the option each year to test at various levels for the Diplome d’Etudes en Langue Française (DELF), a certification of French-language abilities for non-native speakers administered by the International Centre for French Studies for France’s Ministry of Education.

Arts

Students' exposure to visual arts, music, and media curricula at all grade levels encourages their appreciation of the Fine Arts. At the Preschool level, art helps develop fine motor skills while encouraging creativity. Preschool art classes include hands-on experiences in various forms of media coupled with lessons on art history and appreciation. The Preschool music education curriculum helps students develop vocal, rhythmic, and aural skills. Preschool students have fundamental exposure to media literacy while rotating through the Innovation lab each week. Green screen technology is used in the lab to transport the youngest Blue Gators into movie magic.

The Lower School aims to give each student a broad appreciation of visual and performing arts. To this end, students participate in a Fine Arts rotation that includes music, visual arts, and media literacy. The fifth-grade year culminates in a musical production in which fifth graders perform a full-length musical as a class, and our sixth and seventh graders have the option to perform a full-length musical as an extra-curricular activity. In addition to the academic rigor these classes offer, students participate in after-school chorus performances and musical productions containing an audition element whereby they must prepare a music selection and monologue.

While most students choose to enroll in a Fine Arts course for each of their four high school years, all Upper School students are required to take at least two years of Fine Arts. Fine Arts courses include photography, digital media, visual arts, music, chorus, and theatre. In addition to after-school performances for the music students, gallery showings for photography and visual artists, and drama/musical productions for performing artists, the Fine Arts program offers a wide array of opportunities for students to showcase their work. Along with two other Parent Support Organizations, an active Fine Arts Alliance helps to support and advocate for the arts.

Athletics

The Ascension athletic program seeks to advance the school's mission within the arena of developmental and competitive athletics. Ascension is committed to athletic excellence through sound instruction, maximum participation, and good sportsmanship at every stage of the school's athletic programs. Through a progressive, planned sequence, student athletes learn the fundamentals
and techniques of each sport, as well as lessons designed to foster good sportsmanship, respect for one’s opponent, respect for the rules, and the ability to win and lose with grace. Approximately 90-95% of Ascension students participate in a sport in the Upper School Division. Ascension athletic teams offer both male and female students a variety of competitive options, including baseball, softball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, soccer, swimming, tennis, track, and volleyball. The school’s varsity athletic programs have met with much success during their early years, earning fifteen team state championships, thirteen team state runner-up titles, and more than fifteen individual state titles. An active parent supported Booster Club helps to support the athletic program, and school spirit is promoted from preschool through graduation.

Student Life

Student Life is a rich aspect of the Ascension experience. At the Upper School, student government uses a prefect system of leadership in which eight elected prefects (juniors and seniors) oversee individual committees of elected class leaders from grades 8-12. This collective body is responsible for all student programming, including academic and athletic pep rallies, school dances, Homecoming Week events, and other student focused field days. Outside of student leadership, the Upper School boasts more than 25 clubs and organizations for student involvement as well as a full advisory program led by Upper School faculty.

Community service is a vital component of student life. Once every quarter, student groups in grades 9-12 participate in service days throughout Acadiana. Most years, students have the opportunity to travel with school faculty and administration for a service trip. With the help of the Community Service Prefect, students can also find a variety of local opportunities to volunteer. Another hallmark of student life at Ascension is the class trip. Beginning in fourth grade, students make a trip with their classmates, teachers, and members of the administration. Eighth graders take a study tour of Boston and the North Shore of Massachusetts. In the past, our Freshmen have kayaked on the Okatoma River in Mississippi and spent the night at a rustic lodge. Sophomores took an adventure trip to northern Alabama, where they hiked and rock climbed. This year, class retreats for Freshmen and Sophomores

Balanced Excellence

Balanced Excellence is a huge part of accomplishing our mission. It is a structure of programs we use to ensure every student has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential. From structured curriculum to after-school programs and extracurriculars, we have created opportunities for every student to participate in academics, athletics, fine arts, and spiritual life.

Our goal is to provide each student with the opportunity to achieve high academic standards, to gain an appreciation for the fine arts, to have the opportunity to compete in competitive athletics, and ultimately to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, and physically.
The School (continued)

will be added to strengthen the cohesiveness and connections within each class. Twice a year, Juniors spend four days on a college tour, seeing a variety of colleges and universities in the South. In addition to fostering community and individual growth, Ascension’s class trips also provide students with a rich trove of memories.

Governance

Ascension Episcopal School is an unincorporated ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension. The church’s authority lies in the Vestry and its Rector, who delegate the school’s affairs to the School Board according to its bylaws. The school is self-supporting and operates with a separate budget. The Board is a diverse group comprising 14 members, at least one-half of whom must be qualified electors of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension. The Rector of the Church and an appointed member of the parish Vestry serve as ex-officio voting members of the Board.

In January 2021, the School Board adopted a five year strategic plan that was initially implemented in July 2021. This strategic plan is the result of a thorough process which involved all stakeholders—parents, students, faculty, Board members, and Administration. The plan is organized into eight focus areas and is intended to provide guidelines and put in place initiatives that will contribute to moving the mission forward. The strategic plan is tracked and re-assessed annually, and the assessment following the first year has already resulted in significant improvements.

The Community

Lafayette is located in south central Louisiana and serves as a major economic center in the state. Situated between New Orleans and Houston, Lafayette is known as the “Hub City.” It is in the heart of Acadiana—a unique cultural region named for the hardworking and fun-loving Acadians (“Cajuns”) who were exiled from their homeland of Nova Scotia in the mid-18th century. Today “Acadiana” boasts a richly diverse culture with French, Native American, African, German, Spanish, and other influences. Half-a-million people live in the eight parishes (counties) of Acadiana, and Lafayette continues to be the fifth most populous city in the state, with a population of 126,674. Lafayette enjoys mild, comfortable winters and hot, humid summers. The area has long been known as a “Sportsman’s Paradise,” with easy access to golfing, fishing, hunting, water-skiing, boating, hiking, biking, bird watching, and canoe trips through the swamps and bayous.

For over 50 years, Lafayette has been an important area for oil and gas development. However, the business arena has diversified in recent years to also include technology, manufacturing, and medical fields. Acadiana’s top ten businesses now bring in almost a billion dollars annually. A national center for manufacturing robotics, the city conducts extensive technology research for AT&T’s Bell Labs and MIT. Lafayette houses five major medical centers as well as numerous regional, local, and specialty hospitals and clinics, offering robotic surgery and other state-of-the-art technologies. In recent years, Lafayette has also become a center for tourism, with hospitality—the second largest industry—helping to stabilize a local economy once dominated by petroleum. The employment base of Lafayette Parish is heavily professional, creating one of the more affluent population bases in the state. The Acadiana region’s
The Community (continued)

Cajun and Creole cultures are known around the globe, creating a unique environment for work and play. Year-round festivals promote the history, culture, and industries of the area, and nationally-known performers share their art with the community.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL Lafayette), the second-largest university in the state with an average enrollment of over 19,000 undergraduate and graduate students and a full-time faculty of 613, is a significant contributor to the region’s economy. UL Lafayette is nationally recognized for its advanced technology and serves as a major research center for the area. The University holds the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Learning’s elite R1 designation, ranking it among the nation’s top public and private research institutions.

Lafayette is home to Cajun and Creole cuisine, excellent shopping, and a landscape of meandering bayous amid moss-draped oaks. The Cajundome complex accommodates college basketball and nationally recognized entertainers, and the Cajundome Convention Center contains 100,000 square feet of modern meeting and exhibition space. The Heymann Center for the Performing Arts hosts national Broadway touring groups, local cultural events, classical symphony and dance concerts, and other stage productions.

Prior to the 2008 opening of Ascension’s Upper School Campus, no new high school had been built in Acadiana in over 25 years. The population has grown significantly with a disproportionate base located in south Lafayette Parish. The spirit of the Acadiana region is encouraged by the Fine Arts programming, athletic teams, and the involvement of the students and faculty in various civic and volunteer projects. The Ascension expansion is changing the educational landscape and improving the quality of life in the community.

Application Process & Timeline

Candidates for the Head of School position should submit applications electronically to Southern Teachers (available at SouthernTeachers.com) along with a current resume and a cover letter expressing interest in and qualifications for this leadership position. If selected for further consideration, the school will request a statement of their educational philosophy and practice and a list of five professional references with contact information and the nature of the work relationship for each.

The compensation package for the Head of School will be commensurate with experience and competitive with the regional independent school market.

Ascension Episcopal School is an Equal Opportunity Employer

https://www.ascensionbluegators.org

The new Head of School will begin work July 1, 2023.

Questions may be directed to Mr. Jamie Estes at jamie.estes@SouthernTeachers.com. Initial interviews with the consultants at Southern Teachers will be ongoing.

Please do not contact the school.