



KIRK DAY SCHOOL
PROVEN ♦ PASSIONATE ♦ PURPOSEFUL

Head of School Opportunity Profile 2014



Welcome Letter

Dear Prospective Head of School Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Head of School position at Kirk Day School. Our desire is that this Opportunity Profile will offer you a comprehensive first glance at our school and the key characteristics needed in our next leader.

Head of School Sue Pitzer has served Kirk Day School since June 1993 when she became the first leader of the newly organized school. She will retire after the 2014-2015 school year, leaving a legacy of her love for children and her passion for Christian education. In her words, “The faculty and School Board have just successfully completed the school’s third accreditation cycle with Christian Schools International and AdvancEd (North Central), making this an opportune time to search for the leadership that will take Kirk Day School into the future.”

As we look to that future, we seek a leader who will lead with strength and tell the remarkable story of Kirk Day School. Enrollment is on the rise, and we seek a leader who will continue to promote the proven, passionate, and purposeful education that gifted Kirk faculty members are delivering every day. Further, our board and parents are actively engaged and uncommonly passionate about seeing Kirk Day School flourish.

We encourage you to read through this Opportunity Profile and to further explore our website for additional information. If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity, please reference the Process of Candidacy page to begin the application process. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Coverstone (615-261-4623) or Ed Poff (860-983-0367), the JobfitMatters consultants who are assisting Kirk Day School in this search.

Sincerely,



Jeff Johnson

President, Board of Directors



Who We Are...

We are an independent Christian elementary school for children ages 3 through grade 6.

We are a diverse community of learners that value academic excellence taught in the context of a Biblical worldview.

We are passionate about kids, equipping their minds and nurturing their hearts.

We are ranked in the top 10% of Christian schools nationwide.



We are driven by a dedicated, experienced, and spiritually vibrant staff committed to loving and educating each child according to his or her individual needs.

We are committed to celebrating success and learning from failure, embracing both as an important and inevitable part of a child's growth.

We are seeking a high energy, experienced, visionary leader to embrace all that we are and lead us to grow in impact, in reputation and in resources.

We are motivated by God's unmerited favor, we desire to be a grace-filled culture known for our kindness, empathy and love. We believe grace changes everything.

We are a close knit community of involved and supportive parents.

We are committed to shaping critical thinkers, strong leaders, and problem solvers.

We are blessed to be financially strong. KDS is debt free with 15% of students receiving financial aid, and an annual giving fund goal being regularly met.

We are a private school operated as a ministry of Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian church.

We are Kirk Day School.

School Distinctives

Kirk Day School, an independent Christian elementary school, has been preparing students for the academic rigors of college preparatory high schools since 1992. Nestled in the heart of west St. Louis County, KDS draws families from 32 zip codes who worship at 60 different churches.

Excellence in Academics

KDS offers a full range of relevant and challenging academic courses to our nearly 250 students. The school's strong academic track record of achievement and high level of excellence is maintained through faculty professional development, yearly reviews of school curriculum, and regular accreditation visits.

Growing, Diverse, Grace-Filled Community

This year 55 new families (77 new students) joined the Kirk Day School Family. We believe each child is a unique creation of God and is valuable in his sight. It is our desire to provide a loving and caring environment that will foster an atmosphere of learning amid a warm and diverse community.

Dedicated, Experienced, Spiritually Vibrant Faculty

We have an excellent faculty of men and women who have demonstrated diligence in teaching and commitment to nurturing our students in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Our teachers have an average 18 years experience teaching and hold a combined 17 advanced degrees. Through differentiated teaching methods and strategies, our faculty strive to meet the individual needs of our students. The integration of faith in each classroom and Godly wisdom of the administrative team is at the heart of the school's success.



KDS successfully passed the rigorous five-year dual reaccreditation process with CSI and AdvanceEd. With no debt, a strong reputation in the community and a solid relationship with Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian church, the school is positioned well to grow.

Defining Qualities

Academic Excellence Grounded in a Biblical Worldview

Kirk Day School strives toward excellence through annual curriculum review, regular professional development, teaching through a consistent Biblical worldview lens, a commitment to community service, renowned Special Services programs, and an Academically Gifted program.



Proven

Kirk Day School prepares students for the academic rigors of college preparatory high schools by producing graduates who excel academically, participate actively, and engage the world for Christ. Our graduates are well regarded and accepted into St. Louis' top private and public schools with advanced programs. Graduates from Kirk Day School consistently score within the top 5% of 7th grade honors math placement exams.



Passionate

KDS believes each child is uniquely created in the image of God with different strengths, struggles and blessings. We are passionately focused on meeting all the child's needs: spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual. In addition to weekly chapel, students spend their entire day exploring what it means to glorify God through their academic studies and their relationships with one another.



Purposeful

Kirk Day School offers academic excellence with a Biblical worldview through a rigorous and vibrant education rooted in God's Word. KDS students are challenged to become critical thinkers who filter academics, arts, sports, media, and the world at large through the truth of God's Word.

History

Kirk Day School was founded in 1992, under the leadership of Dr. Wilson Benton, Senior Pastor of The Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church. In 1993, the school hired Sue Pitzer, a teacher at Westminster Christian Academy with an exceptional understanding of the principles of Christian education, to serve as Head of School over an enrollment of 168 students from three years old through fifth grade. The Board committed to a full range of Co-Curricular instruction, including teachers for music, art, physical education and foreign language, in addition to classroom faculty.



In 1995, enrollment increased to 240 students and construction work on the gymnasium and additional classrooms was completed. An Athletic Director and Resource teacher were added to the staff the following year. By 2000, the school reached capacity enrollment with a full cadre of elementary classrooms.

Committed to serving a wider array of learners, KDS added three intensive classrooms for students with moderate to severe learning disabilities, under the direction of Dr. B. J. Wiemer, a former Board member and experienced Special Education Teacher. Faculty at KDS strive to meet the educational goals of each student, including the academically gifted, challenging them to reach their potential through individualized instruction.

For over two decades, God has abundantly blessed the school with board members, administrators and teachers who clearly understand their calling to train covenant children for kingdom service. Under the leadership of Sue Pitzer, KDS has thrived and become a renowned leader in the Christian educational community. Our active and enthusiastic Board participates regularly in strategic planning for the future and is committed to continuing the pursuit of excellence in education within a Biblical context.

KDS at a Glance

Enrollment

242 students
85% Caucasian
10% African-American
5% Asian
Zip Codes represented: 32

Classrooms

Typical class size: 15
Teacher/student ratio: 10:1
Faculty advanced degrees: 17
Average teaching experience: 18 years
Average classes per grade level: 2

Financial

Annual Budget 2013-2014: \$1,832,197
Giving for 2013-2014: \$187,431
Total Debt: \$0

Tuition

\$2,795 - \$7,550
Financial aid: 15%

Church Representation

60 churches
Kirk of the Hills Church Members: 15%

Accreditations & Memberships

KDS is accredited by both AdvancEd/North Central Association and Christian Schools International (CSI) and maintains membership with Independent Schools of St. Louis (ISSL), Christian Schools Association of St. Louis (CSASL), and the Education Research Bureau (ERB).

Governance

The Kirk of the Hills School Board appoints the head of school to serve as the chief spiritual, academic, and executive leader of the school in accordance with the Bylaws of Kirk Day School. Serving as an ex-officio member of the Board, the head of school reports to and is assessed by the Board of Directors. The Session of the church approves all members of the Board, which is comprised of six to twelve members, at least three active church officers (including at least one Elder), and the Senior Pastor or his pastoral staff delegate, as an ex-officio member.

Currently, the head of school's leadership team is structured with the following members: Assistant Head & Academic Dean, Director of Admissions & Advancement, Director of Special Services, Early Childhood Department Head, Lower Elementary Department Head, Upper Elementary Department Head, Co-curricular Department Head, At Large Steering Committee Member, and Administrative Assistant to the Admin Team.



The Opportunity

The next head of Kirk Day School will serve as the spiritual, academic, and executive leader of the school to build on current strengths and cast vision for growth and change. The spiritual and personal characteristics of KDS's next head of school are crucial: a passion for children, a heart for Christ, servant leadership, an outgoing and engaging personality, approachability, and ability to bring out the best in others. KDS also needs a champion for and nurturer of an exceptionally competent and passionate faculty, as well as someone who will collaboratively and continuously improve the academic program. The next head of school will embrace all that we are and lead us to grow in impact, in reputation, and in resources.

Leadership Characteristics of the Ideal Head of School

Reformed Christian Commitment

- ◆ Be a spiritually mature Christian displaying Christ-centered servant leadership that drives the integration of faith and learning.
- ◆ Embrace a Reformed theology, believe in the inerrancy of Scripture and attend a Reformed church.
- ◆ Be able to articulate and apply biblical principles in the life and work of the school community.
- ◆ Be known as a person of impeccable character, respected as trustworthy, living the values of integrity, service, and respect for others.
- ◆ Be a leader who relies on Godly wisdom in making decisions.



Relational and Communication Skills

- ◆ Be able to communicate and demonstrate deep affection for students, faculty, and the educational enterprise. A deep commitment and passion for the integration of Christian faith and academics should be at the forefront of this person's mind and heart in presentations and meetings.
- ◆ Be an engaging and articulate person who has a passion for the school's vision and mission and be able to tell the KDS story in a compelling manner that attracts students, faculty, and staff.
- ◆ Be an influencer who has contagious enthusiasm. The ability to engage and stimulate confidence on the part of all the constituencies in the KDS community is important.
- ◆ Be a good listener, actively listening to new and different viewpoints and engaging in dialogue regarding these viewpoints, but ultimately having the courage to be decisive and bold.
- ◆ Be a visionary who can build on current strengths while also seeing potential areas for growth and change.

The Opportunity

Leadership Characteristics of the Ideal Head of School

Continued

Collaborative School Leadership

- ◆ Be an excellent community-builder, team leader, and motivator; this person must inspire enthusiasm, continue to build a joyful community, cast the vision, and be open to, and create new ideas for, continuous improvement, growth, and development.
- ◆ Demonstrate respect for, and sensitivity to, the rich history, culture, and accomplishments of KDS, while also being willing to enact change where needed.
- ◆ Develop and nurture quality relationships with the Kirk of the Hills church community, as well as the broader church community
- ◆ Serve as a positive, collaborative member of the Christian Schools Association of St. Louis (CSASL), advocating for and supporting Christian education in St. Louis.
- ◆ Lead overall strategic planning with the Board and administrative team.
- ◆ Provide instructional leadership through training, motivating, and empowering the faculty and staff on relevant, proven and current learning and teaching theory.

Fundraising & Marketing Abilities

- ◆ The next Head of School will build upon recent advances in marketing, fundraising and enrollment. As the key external liaison of the school, this person will be the face of KDS to various constituents.
- ◆ Ensure missional and financial sustainability through creative and effective utilization of resources and innovative funding programs.
- ◆ Advance and strengthen Kirk Day School's position as a leader in Christian education within both the regional and national educational communities.



The Opportunity

Expectations of the Head of School

1. Provide strong spiritual and instructional leadership for the KDS community of students, parents, faculty and staff.
2. Prioritize existing programs and directions, and then focus resources on those priorities.
3. Lead in strengthening the visibility and reputation of the school throughout the broader regional and national communities by promoting the school's strong academic and Biblically grounded programs.
4. Undertake all necessary activities related to maintaining Kirk Day School's accreditations and professional memberships and achievements.
5. Improve and ensure the high standards of Kirk Day School's distinctive, academically excellent Christian worldview curriculum at all grade levels.

OUR PURPOSE To assist Christian parents in the nurture of Covenant children, educating them in a Christian world and life view, according to the truth of God's Word, equipping them to be disciples of Christ, impacting His world.

Where is the Ideal Candidate Today?

The ideal candidate could likely come from an academically strong Christian elementary school, but the right leader may come from a variety of vocations or careers. We believe someone from one of the following areas will likely have the skills and experiences that are needed to lead Kirk Day School. The candidate may approximate one of these descriptions. This list is to encourage potential candidates to understand the breadth of experiences that may fit well in this position:

- ◆ A successful Christian school leader who has led (in a lead or assisting role) elementary schools of 200+ students.
- ◆ A successful secular private or public school leader who believes strongly in Christian education, has a solid Reformed background, and has a significant understanding of non-profits, boards, and fundraising.
- ◆ A higher education leader with elementary school teaching or leadership experience.
- ◆ The preferred candidate will have at least a Master's Degree, along with a minimum of five years teaching experience and five years in administration.

The Opportunity

Process of Candidacy

If, after reading this Opportunity Profile, you sense that the gifts and experiences God has given you are a good match for Kirk Day School, we invite you to begin the inquiry process. We handle all candidate information and conversations confidentially. You may contact Laura Coverstone at any stage of the process to get more information and to ask questions (see contact information below).

Please provide the following for review:

1. A current resume
2. Responses to the following essay questions:
 - ◆ Using what you have learned about Kirk Day School from the website, this Opportunity Profile, and any other research you have conducted, describe how your life and career have prepared you to lead KDS. Include five words that your current school (or place of business) might use to describe you.
 - ◆ The Christian education community is diverse and parents have multiple reasons for their educational choices. Describe your thoughts on the various choices for families as they pursue Christian education for their children (i.e. public school as a place to witness, home school, and private school) and why you feel called to lead a school like KDS.
 - ◆ Imagine walking into an ideal, effective third grade classroom. Describe what you see.
3. Provide the names and contact information (telephone numbers and email addresses) for four references who know you and your career well enough to comment on your suitability for the head of school position at KDS. (References will only be contacted after we have requested and received your permission to do so.)

Submit this information in one Microsoft Word (.doc) document to:

Laura Coverstone
JobfitMatters
resumes@simainternational.com
Phone: 615-261-4623

In the subject line of the email, please write “Head - Kirk Day School”