St. George’s Independent School (SGIS), an Episcopal, coeducational school spread over three campuses for students in prekindergarten through grade 12, seeks an engaging, entrepreneurial leader who exudes a passion for teaching and learning to serve as its Upper School Director, effective July 2018. Successful candidates will have records of strong leadership, management, and communication skills as well as the inclination and experience to work within a diverse community. The next Upper School Director will be a warm and respected presence who is eager to be a part of this unique community.

The community at St. George’s believes in learning for life. This unique vision adopts a holistic approach to learning, embracing academic rigor as well as spiritual, physical, and social development. An honor code supports an environment where compassion, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, perseverance, work ethic, and faith thrive. Students comment on the school’s familial feel, and they actively want to be on campus. They arrive early, stay late, and form strong relationships with faculty members who are actively invested in the SGIS sense of community.

SGIS’ educational model is unique and unlike any other school in the country. The one school/three campus model builds bridges between urban and suburban communities, developing relationships and connections through education. The school collectively embraces a vision of transformative diversity through this distinctive model, facilitating relationships among various families and backgrounds that endure and thrive across grade levels, in college, and beyond.
Memphis campus, funded primarily by donors, is located in the heart of the city and serves families who might not otherwise have financial or logistical access to an independent-school setting.

**The School**

Today, SGIS serves nearly 1,100 students across its three campuses in Germantown (PK-5), Memphis (PK-5), and Collierville (6-12). On the Collierville campus, 582 students are in the middle and upper Schools: 220 in grades 6-8 and 362 in grades 9-12. Nearly 50 zip codes are represented in the student body, making for a diverse and inclusive environment that welcomes students and their families of all religions and ethnic backgrounds.

An Episcopal school bolstered by its unique three campus/one school feel, SGIS produces students who are well prepared to pursue their futures with confidence and passion, and who enter the world ready to contribute to it positively. A 9:1 student/teacher ratio means teachers know each student well and are able to provide the individual attention and support needed for academic success. With challenging lessons, the faculty carefully prepares students to responsibly but robustly embrace active engagement. The school’s Episcopal values blend with a strong sense of honor and a steadfast commitment to academic excellence, yielding an educational approach that is truly holistic.

The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
ACADEMICS

A St. George’s education weaves together active learning and agile teaching to build disciplined minds, adventurous spirits, and brave hearts. The school offers an educational model deeply rooted in a commitment to preparing students to work competently and confidently in an increasingly complex and global economy.

The school focuses on equipping students with all the basics—critical language arts skills, mathematical fluencies, and scientific logic—using compelling methods of instruction. A staff of passionate teachers who are experts in their fields use a combination of active lessons, collaborative work, and experiential projects that effectively engage students and build a lifelong love of learning.

At SGIS, academic excellence means both a high level of success and the fulfillment of each student’s personal potential. Students are encouraged to apply their talents to the real world and strive to make a difference. Spiritual reflection, service learning, and the development of moral character each contribute to the curriculum. At the heart of the program is a commitment to joy—students and teachers alike believe wholeheartedly that learning should be exciting, stimulating, inspiring, and fun.

LOWER SCHOOL

Learning begins in the early childhood program, where faculty and staff keep abreast of the latest research in early childhood development in order to create the fundamental building blocks of learning. They apply their knowledge and experience to the classroom, creating dynamic, hands-on...
experiences that help students build key emotional and intellectual skills. This experiential type of learning continues throughout the lower school and beyond. The elementary division, which nurtures the development of students in grades two through five, supports and focuses on the continued growth of the whole child, engaging them in rigorous, student-centered programs that provide them with opportunities to think critically and apply skills at challenging levels. Students develop leadership and team-building skills, as teachers incorporate character education and values instruction throughout the program. These lessons help prepare young students for the holistic approach that emphasizes leadership in the middle and upper schools. Additionally, iPads and either classroom computers or mobile laptop carts are incorporated into curricular activities, and students have the opportunity to videoconference with students and organizations across the country.

**Middle and Upper School**

Programs in the middle and upper schools are designed to foster thinking that is critical and deep while building skills critical to success in college and the workforce: collaboration, creativity, and communication. Deepening students’ instruction, technology is integrated in all aspects of the curriculum: all students in middle and upper school have their own laptops. The school employs a traditional department structure, with students pursuing coursework in English, history, lab sciences, math, languages, arts, religion, wellness, and a Senior Independent Study (SIS). In SIS, every senior explores an area of curiosity or personal passion and creates a project as part of this graduation requirement. SIS includes an exploratory experience (traditionally during the summer), the pursuit of a project stemming from the student’s passion or curiosity, and either a research paper or process paper. This capstone of the upper school culminates with an oral defense of the student’s work to a faculty panel.
The school strives to prepare students for the opportunities and challenges of college, and college counselors assist students as they navigate the complicated process of finding the right school for them. Each year, students gain admission to a long list of highly selective colleges and universities across the country.

**ARTS AND ATHLETICS**

Student athletes have acquired numerous athletic accolades over the years, including 23 state championships, 16 individual championships, and two invitational championships. Students can participate on several sports teams, including cheerleading, cross country, football, golf, soccer, volleyball, basketball, swimming, wrestling, baseball, lacrosse, softball, tennis, track and field, trap shooting, and water polo.

SGIS also provides important avenues for students to develop creative expression, open-mindedness, confidence, and a sense of wonder. Students take various visual arts courses, thespians can perform in five theatrical performances per year, and musicians can engage in...
band, chorus, and music classes. Each year, the Rebecca’s Light visiting artists program brings artists to St. George’s in memory of a St. George’s student. These performances expose students to a variety of musical talent from around the globe, showing students what they can be if they pursue their passions.

**STUDENT LIFE**

Life at SGIS is characterized by a strong sense of belonging in a culture that is intentionally, wholeheartedly student-centered. Firmly rooted in Judeo-Christian values, the SGIS community follows an honor code that encourages all to be honest, dependable, and respectful. The community becomes a second family to each student who walks SGIS’ halls, and every individual plays an active role in developing this unique school culture.

Through co- and extra-curricular programs both on and off campus, the school demonstrates its commitment to interweaving topics of engaged citizenship, ethical literacy, and responsibility. St. George’s offers a number of in-class and after-school activities that enhance and enrich student life. Students are able to explore their passions and interests through a number of clubs, groups, and other organizations on campus, choosing from 52 options including Battle of the Books, Fishing Club, Fleece of Faith, History Club, Mandarin Club, Gryphon Garden, Poetry Slam, Sports Talk, Photography Club, STEAM Club, Literary Magazine, and more.

Learning extends beyond the school’s three campuses, with off-campus activities including overnight trips, foreign travel, and St. George’s Great Outdoors (SGGO) program. This initiative fosters
an appreciation for the outdoors and connection with the environment while instilling a sense of leadership, teamwork, and confidence in students.

In early 2016, St. George’s entered into an exclusive joint partnership with City Leadership to support service learning and community engagement. The multi-faceted partnership includes the St. George’s/Serve901 Bunkhouse, a shared space located in the heart of the city. The “bunkhouse” has common areas and bunks for more than 100 people, and it serves as a meeting space to enhance St. George’s commitment to service learning and leadership. Serve901 staff also collaborates with St. George’s faculty and students to create outstanding year-round learning experiences, from summer camps to dynamic leadership opportunities for middle and upper school students.

The SGIS Institute for Citizenship offers dynamic academic lessons and real-world learning experiences to selected juniors and seniors and funds a speaker series for all upper school students. Launched in 2010 and made possible, in part, by a $50,000 grant from the E.E. Ford Foundation, the Citizenship Institute offers a distinctive curricular option to SGIS students, during which they participate in an intensive two-year-long course that covers civic engagement, current events, and entrepreneurship.

**Physical Campus**

The SGIS community learns together on three campuses encompassing over 250 sprawling acres that, on the Collierville campus, include marshland, a river, and boundless opportunities for outdoor exploration. The Germantown lower school is set amid brick homes and tree-lined streets in a quiet
suburban community. The corresponding lower school building in Memphis thrives in the bustle and hum of the city. This campus, and the donors who have funded it since 2001, allow those who may not have otherwise been able to afford it access to an SGIS education.

The Collierville campus is affectionately known as “the lodge” and offers a warm, inviting atmosphere. This facility, bordered by wilderness areas and dotted with lakes, is home to the middle and upper schools. The two divisions occupy distinct wings in one building.

The school’s impressive athletic facilities include fields and the one of the few Olympic-sized swimming pools in Memphis.

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Memphis was founded in the early 19th century by a group of wealthy Americans. Named for the ancient capital of Egypt on the Nile, Memphis’ location on the Mississippi River made it an ideal hub for trade and transportation. As a business center for the mid-south and a major distribution hub, Memphis is home to industry headquarters for FedEx, Auto Zone, First Horizon, and International Paper. The city’s downtown is hip and beautiful; in 2013, Forbes magazine ranked Memphis one of the top 15 cities in the United States with an “emerging downtown” area. Residents and visitors enjoy the city’s warm southern climate, which features hot summers and mild winters.

Well known worldwide for its music culture and as the site of Graceland, the former home of Elvis Presley, Memphis was the original destination for many of the most esteemed country, rock and roll, and
soul musicians in history. Beale Street, a national historic landmark, demonstrates the city’s influence on American blues. The city welcomes tourists each year to its many festivals, including the Beale Street Music Festival, Carnival Memphis, and the Memphis in May International Festival.

There are several colleges and universities located in Memphis, including Christian Brothers University, Rhodes College, and University of Memphis. The city has the largest medical center and medical school in the south as well as the world-renowned St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

With a nationally ranked zoo, a talented symphony orchestra, multiple community theaters, ballet and opera companies, as well as a winning NBA team and Triple-A baseball team, there is never a shortage of things to do and places to go in Memphis. Bustling and full of rich cultural history, Memphis is a wonderful place to call home.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Upper School Director will face several challenges as well as incredible opportunities:

• Competitive charter and public-school options necessitate enhanced marketing efforts in surrounding areas to counter enrollment vulnerability in middle and upper schools
• SGIS co-educational model and progressive mission uniquely position the school in the local independent school marketplace
• Student body is composed of 30% students of color and originate from 50 different zip codes
• Three-campus model empowers students to learn from each other, introducing societal complexities beyond graduation
• SGIS facilitates conversations of difference in students due to culture, race, socioeconomic status, religion, or other family circumstance
• Roles and responsibilities of Upper School Director have shifted dramatically with changes in leadership and exponential growth of the school
• Service-minded initiatives with city of Memphis (ex. Bunkhouse) present huge marketing potential
• Physical location outside Memphis proper prevents some families from considering SGIS

QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES OF THE NEXT UPPER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The favored candidate for the next Upper School Director will be/possess:

• An entrepreneurial visionary who can lead strategically and encourage innovation and creativity in programs and pedagogy
• Commitment to transformative diversity that is central to SGIS mission
• Highly visible on campus and engaged with students, faculty, and parents on a daily basis
• An educator with a strong academic background who can guide and enhance curriculum and programs
• Demonstrated passion for and experience in working with urban populations
• Humility and commitment to a growth mindset
• Excellent communication and organizational skills
• Flexibility and sensitivity in navigating the complexity that a SGIS population presents
• An eagerness to strategically participate in admissions efforts
• Ability to delegate
• Keen sense of humor
• Classroom teaching experience with US students
• Commitment to Episcopalian values in education
• Appreciation for the outdoors and vision for maximizing SGIS’ unique campus geography

**To Apply**

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically in one email and as separate documents (preferably PDFs) the following materials:

• A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
• A current résumé
• A one-page statement of educational philosophy and practice
• A list of five (5) professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each to:

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