



**HEAD OF SCHOOL  
July 1, 2012**

**ST. MARTIN'S IN-THE-FIELD DAY SCHOOL  
Severna Park, Maryland**

**THE SCHOOL**

Located in Severna Park, MD, St. Martin's in-the-Field Day School has been "teaching minds and touching hearts" since 1957. It is currently serving 238 students in PS through Grade 8, providing a spiritual educational experience within the Episcopal tradition. It occupies a gracious and carefully tended 7 acre church and school campus. Severna Park lies just to the north of Annapolis and is within easy reach of Baltimore to the north, Washington to the southwest, and, via the Bay Bridge, Maryland's beautiful Eastern Shore. It is a region widely recognized by major magazines and media as one of the best, most desirable, and most technologically-advanced places in the US to live and raise a family.

**ST. MARTIN'S MISSION STATEMENT**

"St. Martin's in-the-Field Day School seeks to inspire in our children a love of inquiry, a sustaining faith, and a generous spirit open to ideas, peoples of the world, and a call to service. At our Episcopal school, students discover who they are as learners, leaders and friends. We create a welcoming community that encourages each individual to grow in confidence, creativity, integrity, and compassion, grounded in the knowledge that each is a child of God."

The School's mission statement is complemented by its vision statement, which elaborates upon the mission. "St. Martin's vision is to create a passion for learning and discovery in a supportive, spiritual atmosphere, consistent with the Episcopal tradition. All students are encouraged to dream, explore, and experiment, as they grow into the children God has created them to be. Our faculty and staff are committed to helping each student develop the self-confidence, self-discipline, and self-respect necessary for strong character development and academic success. St. Martin's strives to empower its students to be responsible members of the community." The school adheres to core values that include a "respect for self and others, honesty, compassion, and a sense of worth that comes from understanding oneself as a child of God."

## ST. MARTIN'S PRIORITIES AS IT SEEKS NEW LEADERSHIP

St. Martin's has enjoyed long, stable, and expert leadership as it has grown from a small church pre-school to a much larger, thriving pre-school through middle school serving students and families in the Severna Park and greater Annapolis area. Now, with a long-serving Head and Business Manager leaving at the same time, and an Interim Head arriving for the 2011 - 2012 year, the school has an opportunity for "new eyes" to assess all aspects of the school's operations: program, policies and procedures and their documentation, systems, and technology. This opportunity coincides with the school's self-assessment in connection with its first evaluation and accreditation by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools. The self-study has begun and will continue in 2011 - 2012 in anticipation of the concluding accreditation visit in the fall of 2012.



The school's educational program is broadly acclaimed and warmly appreciated within the community. This respect has not shielded the school, however, from declining enrollment over the last few years, due largely to the impacts of the recession, a school-age population in the region remaining stable in size, and competition from award-winning public schools as well as non-public schools providing parents with an array of choice at a variety of price points, some more and some less expensive than St. Martin's. There is also the possibility that Maryland public schools will mandate pre-kindergarten programming in the near future.

The next Head of School will need to be an educational leader able to help "polish" an excellent program, but will also need to provide leadership in:

- PR and marketing in support of restoring enrollment to sustainable levels
- Expanding effective communications, both internally and externally
- Ensuring professionalism commensurate with expectations of the marketplace
- Programmatic and administrative use of technology in optimal ways
- Resource allocation that addresses the school's admissions and fund raising needs
- Re-imagining programs for vibrancy and relevance

## BRIEF HISTORY

St. Martin's in-the-Field Day School was established in 1957 as a church pre-school program. The Church was started three years earlier on land donated for that purpose, and its original building, now called Heck Hall, was completed in 1955 and offered the space that gave the school its start. The school quickly earned a reputation for excellence in early childhood education and for providing an environment that promotes the growth of the whole child. Sharon Holsclaw came to the school as a teacher in 1986, and was named Director of the Pre-School in 1995.

In 1999, the decision was made to start adding elementary grades, one year at a time, going through the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This expansion was made possible by tasteful and effective restoration of the church undercroft. At the same time, the Board of Trustees and Vestry initiated a facilities planning process to assess expansion options available on the two acres of land not subject to conservation restrictions. Plans for a gymnasium were developed in accordance with current codes, and then put on hold when construction costs exceeded the school's realistic estimation of what it could raise. (There is hope that these plans could be reasonably easily revived.) In 2007 the school initiated its middle school program, and its fourth class of eighth graders will "graduate" in 2011.

## SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

Enrollment	250
Preschool	114
Lower School	70
Middle School	66
Geographic Diversity	13 cities and towns represented
Teaching Faculty	19 full time; 18 part time
Administrators	3 full time
Student to Teacher Ratio	Pre-S: 9 to 1; Elem.: 13 to 1; MS: 16 to 1
Campus	2 buildings on 7 acres
Operating Budget FY 11 Projected	\$1.9 million
Aid in FY 11	\$32,000
Tuition remission in FY 11	\$52,900
Full Day Tuitions for '10 - '11	\$7,785 to \$9,175
Memberships	AIMS (candidacy), NAES
Website	<a href="http://www.stmartinsdayschool.org">www.stmartinsdayschool.org</a>

## COMMUNITY OF THE SCHOOL

First and foremost, St. Martin's Day School is an educational ministry of St. Martin's in-the-Field Episcopal Church, which stands prominently at the center of this very spiritual community. The parish is a thriving one and in 2002 was recognized as the Parish of the Year by the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. The church and its school are a combined and inseparable enterprise. When a funeral occurs in the middle of a school day, it requires shared use of driveways, parking spaces, and gathering areas, with the laughter of children playing a sweet reminder that life follows death, and joy follows sadness. The interconnectedness of it all is unmistakable, and a hallmark of this institution.

Constituents frequently describe the school as "the best kept secret in Severna Park." Its original niche was that of a great pre-school, but the reputation now applies to all its grade levels and goes well beyond an appreciation of academic programming. First there is a community ethos that stems from the Episcopal identity regularly described as more broadly Christian than Episcopal per se. While weekly chapel is an important ritual also identified as one of the school's key selling points, there is nothing overbearing about the approach. Instead, there is a climate of institutional open-heartedness and generosity that even the students identify favorably.

"Nurturing" is a frequently used adjective, and parents are clear about the school's love of kids. "They matter." The school is a very caring and capable place. "Kids' issues are handled very well." The school is repeatedly described as having "heart and passion" as it meets effectively



the individual needs of its students. Faculty are in touch with their students' social and emotional needs as well as their academic needs.

In an interesting counterpoint to current trends, several parents and faculty described their school fondly as a place where you can still hold and hug children. One person commented that the strength extends to "hand holding for parents, as well."

Much of the school's sense of community derives from what was referred to as "deep tenure." In

addition to the retiring Head of School, there are a number of other faculty and staff with many years of service who provide both a programmatic and a kind of spiritual continuity to the way the school thinks about its children.

Parents and teachers continued these themes in describing attributes of the teaching and learning environment for children. Small classes, creative teaching, freedom to be flexible, teachers who are not administratively second-guessed, no need to "teach to the test," and attention to individual needs all contribute to the school's ability to be both nurturing and challenging. Teachers are acknowledged for being flexible, willing to go above and beyond, and able to work in interdisciplinary modes. Teachers love what they do, want kids to be curious, and allow "kids to be kids a little longer than other schools, while still challenging them to grow." Parents and faculty repeatedly shared the perception that the school tone is fundamentally positive and it's a happy place. One parent with three children in the school said "I couldn't be happier. I can't find any negatives."

### **Parents & Students**

The school's parent community is broadly appreciative, generally supportive, and described by a few as very discerning and very opinionated – in short, typical of parents in a good independent school. There is an active parents association that oversees a variety of events each year, each designed to raise some combination of spirits and funds. The major fund raising events are a fall golf tournament raising scholarship funds, and a spring auction that brings in \$40,000 to \$50,000 and most recently supported technology upgrades and provided funds for the purchase of faculty "wish list" items. It is typically the same small group of parents running these events year after year but they do so willingly because they make such a significant financial impact. Their efforts also have a kind of multiplier effect when attendance at these functions includes so many participants outside the school family.

The school's highest enrollment was 325 students four years ago. Pre-school demand was so high that admission was by lottery, and those numbers fed into kindergarten and the rest of the school. The decline of over 25% is attributed first and



*"The school absolutely cares about each child."*



foremost to the economic times, but two other themes are at work. The first is a stable school age demographic. The second is the extraordinarily wide range of good choices available to parents as they seek the best schools for their children. There are local public elementary schools named Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence by the US Dept. of Education. Chesapeake Academy, Indian Creek School, Severn School, and Gibson Island School are independent schools within commuting distance and with at least some levels of grade overlap. There is a Catholic elementary school just up the street from St. Martin's, and there are several other religious pre-schools near by. St. Martin's tuitions are very reasonable when benchmarked to those of traditional independent schools. The reality is, however, that families have less expensive alternatives readily available and the school must remain very price conscious and able to demonstrate value added for the tuition dollar.

Students are delightfully clear and exceptionally articulate about their appreciation of the added value. They love their school. Their teachers work them hard and have high standards, but they feel their teachers' genuine care, and they report that "Learning here is fun." "We care about what we are learning," said one. When asked how they feel about bigger schools their peers at home may talk about, it is very clear that they love their small school and the attributes it can provide. "Everyone knows your name." "There are no enemies." "It's like second family and you have friends from other grades." "There are lots of leaders here, whether in class or in sports." One student even identified the ritual of prayers for the people as holding real meaning for him and his classmates, going on to say that the school's Episcopal nature is really more about values than one particular religion.

*"Forgiveness, tolerance, hope, and faith founded in religion, but these go even more deeply to character development."*

### **Administration**

The school's administrative configuration is rather typical of a small school that expects almost everyone to be able to wear a variety of hats. Overall academic and administrative leadership is provided by the Head of School and the Head of the Middle School. The Business Manager and her assistant handle all of the school's day to day business affairs, including everything from accounts payable and receivable to personnel benefits management. The Development Director and the Communications Director are both part time and have other assignments within the school. Admissions is a function shared by the Head, the Head of the Middle School, and the Business Manager. There are three other administrative assistants, and the Facilities Manager is the school's primary custodian.

## Governance

St. Martin's is governed by a 15 member Board of Trustees. The Board meets monthly except for the months of July and August. It currently functions with four active committees and two task forces. The school is a member of the National Association of Episcopal Schools, whose guidelines on governance clearly vest greater authority in the School's Board of Trustees, in essence expecting the Rector and Vestry to trust in their and their Head's management of the school. For their part, the Rector and the Vestry appear very comfortable with this understanding. Lines of communication between the interested parties are open and respectful and there is real and abiding mutual trust.

The Board and the Vestry together are concerned about the enrollment decline and the need to return to an enrollment number – certainly higher than the current one – that is sustainable and that does not require a continuing draw on limited reserves. Both bodies see this evolution of leadership as an opportunity for the school to apply new energy and perhaps new approaches to what many observers are describing as a “new normal” for independent schools.



## PROGRAM

The school's programs are very generally described throughout this document, but much more detail is available on the school's website: [www.stmartinsdayschool.org](http://www.stmartinsdayschool.org). Interested candidates should visit the site.

It's important to note that St. Martin's is a relatively recently evolved and expanded school. It started as a pre-school and after many years of success, added an elementary school. After success in that incarnation, it added a middle school. With each addition came new challenges, and especially, new consumer expectations. While preparing students for admission to a competitive high school may not be quite like preparing high school seniors for admission to “Ivies,” the stakes do get higher and the institution as a whole is expected to “behave” in different ways. From how it sells itself in admissions to how it structures a secondary school counseling program, things are different whenever older students are added to the mix.

St. Martin's is a work in progress in this respect, and a good one. The program is enthusiastically supported by parents and students alike, and it has excellent leadership from the Head of the Middle School. Faculty report that cross-division programming is very deliberate, though some identify cohesiveness as a challenge because of different locations, schedules, and routines. Across the board, faculty express appreciation of “we-can-try-it” support from the administration, reflecting their belief that their teaching professionalism is respected.

*“We live our mission. We walk the walk. We have clarity, we have community service, and we are even green!”*

## TECHNOLOGY

The school has made significant recent strides in the use of instructional technology, with much of planning coming from faculty and a few parents with expertise in the area, and funding coming from fund-raising events. All teachers have a laptop computer. There is a desktop computer and a document camera in every classroom. Computers are on a wireless network, and can print to any printer. Email communication is supported by a school intranet. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade enjoys use of a smartboard and more are planned. Faculty have remote access to the website. An older computer lab with five workstations has been replaced with a new lab with up to date equipment and 14 workstations. Plans are in place to increase text messaging capabilities, to install computer projectors in every classroom, and to improve website functionality.



Administrative use of technology is supported by hardware and software that are functional in their respective areas of responsibility. There are opportunities here for coordination and efficiencies in managing and sharing information.

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Since the school is a program of its church, it's not surprising that the initial curb appeal is that of the church. Signage is effective but discrete. Once on to the property, it's clear that the school is the weekday's "major event." The campus is handsome, inviting, and carefully maintained.

The school's Pre-School program is in classrooms in the Parish Hall. They are large, neat, well-equipped, and colorful. The elementary classrooms are in the Church undercroft, and are also spacious, bright, and vibrant in their feel. The middle school classrooms are a short walk from the others, and are in four portable buildings joined together in a functional and attractive cluster that in essence gives the program its own small campus and distinct identity.

There is a large and well-equipped playground, and a large playing field supports the PE and athletic program of the middle school. There is no gymnasium per se, but the playing field and very large multi-purpose room are creatively used in support of the younger students' PE program.

The school is ever-mindful of the marketing challenge of selling "a school in basement," especially when the competition is all well above ground. Entries have been attractively designed and large window wells get lots of natural light into most classrooms. From a facilities perspective, the school functions very smoothly and effectively. There is proper attentiveness to codes, the school has made HVAC and sprinkler system improvements as needed, and there is school-wide awareness of the need to be green. The main old boiler was a worry, but a recent gift has provided for its replacement.

## FINANCES



The school's annual operating expenses total approximately \$1.9 million. Eighty percent of that is personnel and compensation expense. Salaries are lower at St. Martin's than at the neighboring independent schools, but described as "contending." The school pays \$375 a month toward whichever health plan employees elect from the Episcopal Diocese's options. LTD insurance is provided through a local agency. A 3% employee contribution triggers a school contribution of 5% to TIAA-CREF. (Due to the recent budget constraints, this is a reduction from 9%, a level the school hopes to restore in the future.) The school allows two weeks of sick and personal leave; sick leave accrues. There has been a tradition of a very modest Christmas bonus, also suspended this year due to budget constraints.

Other major expense lines include just under \$100,000 for financial aid and tuition remission. (Full time employees receive up to 50% remission, with nine students currently covered.) The school pays the church approximately \$70,000 a year for shared facilities and chaplaincy, but the church gives back approximately \$6,000 a year in financial aid support.

The school is largely tuition driven. An Annual Fund was started ten years ago to provide operating support. In addition, and with huge help from the Parents Association, special event income comes from two major events: the golf tournament in the fall and the spring auction in March. There is no history of capital campaigns. There is virtually no other outside support, except a very small piece of State of Maryland entitlement funding derived from a state tobacco tax.

The school has enjoyed a long history of balanced budgets and over the years accumulated an operating reserve of almost a million dollars. Fiscal Year '10 showed a loss, however, as will Fiscal Year '11, and those are being covered by the operating reserve. There is no debt.

It is notable that despite the financial pressures of the last few years and the austerity measures that in essence preserve program while asking adults to work harder, smarter, and faster, there remains a very positive spirit and work environment.

## SEVERNA PARK AND ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Severna Park is a lovely small town of 30,000 residents. Information about the town and its environs is readily available on the web. While the town might be most readily identified as part of the greater Washington – Baltimore urban region, it has its own remarkable attributes, including its proximity to historic Annapolis and the many features of that city itself, including the world-renowned US Naval Academy and St. John's College. Anne Arundel County Community College is a proud player in the State's excellent community college system.

*"We're so small  
there is no chain  
of command."*

## MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Providing Leadership and Vision

#### For the School as a Whole

- Enhance the school as the educational ministry of the parish
- Continue consistent, principled, and mission-based decision making
  - Make decisions as transparent as possible
  - Clarify appropriate communication channels
- Act as the daily and enthusiastic public “face” of the school
- Complete the AIMS evaluation and accreditation process
- Guide wise institutional management of financial resources
- Continue implementation of instructional and administrative technology

#### For the Faculty

- Expect measured progress toward highest and best instructional practice
- Continue implementation of substantive performance evaluations
- Continue implementation of professional development programs
- Develop clear channels of communication

#### Articulating the Message and Raising the Profile

- Enthusiastically sell the people and programs of SMDS
- Help the community craft its SMDS “elevator speech”
- Raise friends

#### Managing Resources

- Maximize the Annual Fund and special event income
- Consider initiatives for raising funds for capital purposes and endowment
- Revisit and promote, if realistic, capital expansion plans

#### Managing Change and Implementing Plans

- Document and standardize policies, procedures, expectations



## THE CANDIDATE

### PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

*The SMDS Board hopes to attract someone who will treat the school not as a stepping stone to the next bigger school, but as a special place in its own right, worthy of a long stay. The next head should possess excellent professional experience and credentials that include the following:*

- Minimum of Masters Degree in Early Childhood or Elementary Education
  - Or other relevant degree
- Teaching experience in the PS to Grade 8 range
- Preschool and/or elementary school administrative experience
  - Ideally in the Episcopal and non-profit sector
  - Ideally with development of analytical, business, and marketing skills
- Current understanding of best practices in teaching and administration
- Familiarity with the evaluation and accreditation process
- Ability to guide, lead, and support staff, parents, and governing body
- Familiarity with external affairs, fund-raising, admissions, and PR
- Understanding of board-vestry-rector relationships in Episcopal schools
- Ability to learn quickly the challenging context of Anne Arundel County
- Discernment of when to collaborate and when to promulgate
- Demonstrated ability to inspire volunteers at all levels

### PERSONAL QUALITIES

*School constituents identify these attributes they hope to see in the next Head of School:*

- Be genuine, warm, and authentic
- Be one who unites, who gathers the vision, and who can be trusted
- Have an intuitive love of children, and be comfortable around them
- Communicate with ease, verbally and in writing
- Be approachable and available
- Be Episcopalian, and understand viscerally what it means to be a parish school
  - If not Episcopalian, still model the importance of the spiritual dimension
- Be comfortable with your own spirituality
  - Have a collaborative style rather than top down
- Be willing to do anything you may ask others to do
- Be willing to be part of the fray; not above it
- Be willing to love the school, and stay with it a long time
- Be a hard worker: willing to be first in and last out
- Be a wise leader – decisive and not afraid of change or tough decisions
- Articulate a clear and enthusiastic vision
- Be firm but fair; visible and inclusive
- Have a sense of humor
- Have a good sense of process; be patient
- Be a good people person and read people well

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Candidates should send a cover letter, resume, statement of educational philosophy, and a list of five references to:

Thomas M. Evans  
Resource Group 175, LLC  
90 Great Western Road  
Harwich, MA 02645  
774-237-0349 or 508-776-2462 (cell)  
[tmevanscca@comcast.net](mailto:tmevanscca@comcast.net)

For additional information about the school, visit its website: [www.stmartinsdayschool.org](http://www.stmartinsdayschool.org)

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SMDS does not discriminate in its policies based on race, religion, national origin,  
sexual preference, or age.