



School Profile: Spring, 2024

Vision

St. Matthew's Episcopal School is a Christian community committed to academic excellence and spiritual growth for our children today.

Mission/Covenant

Believing that "You will be blessed when you walk in, you will be blessed when you walk out," St. Matthew's respects and encourages the individual spiritual beliefs of each member of their community by:

- Giving thanks to God in our prayers
- Taking responsibility for our actions and "doing our best" in everything we do
- Working with students today in a safe and loving community to better our future
- Passionately cultivating the Fruits of the Spirit in our students and families (Love, Joy, Peace, Forbearance, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control)
- Being servant leaders
- Trusting in God's plan for us
- Believing all things are possible through Christ

Staff Retreat August 3, 2023

To demonstrate, acknowledge, and proclaim the unique worth and beauty of all human beings as creations of a loving and empowering God.

Board Strategic Planning Retreat January 13, 2024

Statement of Philosophy

All students deserve the encouragement and opportunity to gain the skills and values that will enable them to become responsible, caring, and trustworthy citizens.

Characteristics of Episcopal Schools

- Episcopal schools are places of genuine hospitality that support the spiritual growth of all, regardless of faith tradition, even as they illuminate the school's Episcopal roots and heritage.
- Episcopal schools have long understood that multiple voices and perspectives are necessary for sound learning and wise decision-making. To this end, Episcopal schools strive to be inclusive communities that promote open and reasoned dialogue that breaks down barriers and promotes human understanding.
- Episcopal schools create and sustain a school culture that advances the dignity and well-being of each person and promotes a genuine sense of belonging.

National Association of Episcopal Schools

History

Founded in 1976 by a group of dedicated community leaders, St. Matthew's Episcopal School was established as a parish day school devoted to promoting spiritual growth and academic excellence for all children. What began as a quiet, small school has since developed into a thriving institution of learning for children ages 18 months through 5th grade. Recent developments to the school include the addition of music, Spanish, and American Sign Language across all grade levels, extracurricular activities such as chess and athletics, and daily child-friendly chapel services.

Enrollment

Current enrollment as of January 15, 2024: 58 students

PK2	10 students
PK3	10 students
PK4	9 students
K	9 students
1st Grade	8 students
2nd Grade	3 students
3rd Grade	6 students
4th Grade	1 student

5th Grade 2 students

Staff

Head of School	Robert Schmidt
Office Manager/Registrar	Janie Perales
PK2 Teacher	Itza Ornelas
PK2 Instructional Aide	Meredith Skalitsky
PK3 Teacher	Martina Lyles
PK3 Instructional Aide	Marisela Rangel
PK4 Teacher	Sonia Parra
PK4 Instructional Aide	Dianeisy Elizondo
Kindergarten Teacher	Angela Salazar
1st Grade Teacher	Sofia Aleman
1st Grade Teacher/Coach	Melissa Cerda
2nd-5th Grade Teacher	Cynthia Alaniz
2nd-5th Grade Teacher	Noe Padron
2nd-5th Grade Teacher	Stephanie Rangel
Music Teacher (Part-Time)	Yingching Jeter
Custodian	Hernan Perez
Volunteer Sacred Studies Teacher	Grace Buchanan

Curriculum Scope and Sequence

St. Matthew's underwent a sweeping revision of its curriculum during the 2021-2022 academic year. PK2 adopted the Frog Street Bilingual curriculum for the school's youngest students who embrace the dynamics of hearing stories, songs, and content in English and Spanish. PK3 also adopted the Frog Street Bilingual curriculum which fosters the development and appreciation for a second language. PK4 adopted a classical curriculum from Memoria Press as its centerpiece for introducing students to classical literature along with values and ideals that support the school's vision and mission.

Music and physical education classes are offered to PK4-5th grade students regularly (PK2 and PK3 teachers incorporate these elements throughout the day in activities and recess). In music, students learn to appreciate the basic elements of theory, including pitch, tempo, rhythm, and an appreciation of musical diversity across cultures and languages. These skills are showcased both in the fall and in the spring with student performances at the Christmas and spring concerts. St. Matthew's value on developing the whole student is also strongly evident in its physical education program where daily lessons are taught that focus

on physical movement, stamina, and wellness of both mind and body. PE classes are also an excellent way for students to unwind and reduce their stress levels.

Spanish classes are offered regularly from PK4-5th grade. Spanish class not only supports learning to speak, read, write, and understand a new language, but it also teaches students to appreciate their own or another's culture here in a predominantly Hispanic area of the country.

Mathematics is taught for K-5 students using Cengage Big Ideas Math—a bright and engaging program that empowers students to solve math problems that deal with real-life situations—fostering an appreciation for the importance of math in our world.

The Science curriculum for K-5 makes use of modules and activities from Foss (Full Option Science System)—used by St. Matthew's for more than 20 years. It is an inquiry-based curriculum that was developed by the University of California at Berkley. This program has been invaluable in fostering our participation in the annual Edinburg CISD District Science Fair, where St. Matthew's students have placed regularly.

K-5 Reading Language Arts employ the My View Literacy program published by Savvas and debuted at St. Matthew's with the scope and sequence revision of 2021-2022. The thematic units and project-based activities provided in the program are rich in social-emotional stories that foster a greater appreciation for our planet, diversity, and social justice—one of the four hallmarks of education in an Episcopal school.

Teachers and students K-5 make use of the McGraw Hill Social Studies program—also implemented with the curriculum revision of 2021-2022. The content and lesson objectives presented at each grade level promote interest and teach historical lessons in a relevant manner. A research component is integrated into the curriculum in an age-appropriate way supporting reasoning coupled with curiosity.

Finally, and most importantly, our Chapel learning series and Sacred Studies curriculum were created by Mrs. Grace Buchanan. Grace has infused the rhythm of the liturgical seasons and the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer with games, songs, and activities that bring the Bible to life as a story of God's love for us all. The program has been in place since the 2017-2018 academic year and includes daily chapel services for all students (PK service and K-5 service), along with Friday afternoon lessons that include both song and movement.

Extracurricular Activities Offered

- Sports (*Cross Country, Track & Field*)
- Tennis Lessons
- KinderDance
- Chess Club
- Edinburg CISD Science Fair Competition

- Edinburg Christmas Parade

Accreditations

Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (*April 2022*)