

Saint Michael Indian School
St. Michaels, Arizona
Draft Job Description

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Chief Executive and Educational Leader

The Head of School leads Saint Michael Indian School, an independent Catholic PK–12 school serving Native families on the Navajo Nation. Founded in 1902 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, the school integrates Catholic formation, Navajo culture, educational opportunity, and service.

As chief executive and educational leader, the Head engages, excites, inspires, and leads the internal and external constituents and stakeholders around a shared vision. In collaboration with functional leaders, the Head sets direction, aligns resources, removes barriers, and evaluates results. Those leaders manage daily implementation within delegated authority; the Head remains accountable for academic quality, school culture, and operational vitality.

Accountability

- Reports directly to the Board of Directors and leads school administration within the governing documents, approved policies, budget, and delegated authority, subject to reserved powers of the sponsor or other governing authority. The Board evaluates the Head annually against agreed goals, with sponsor participation where required.
- Works with the Board to establish clear goals, decision-making authority, and reporting relationships consistent with the school's governing documents.

Supervises

Academic leaders; the Director of Advancement; Athletic Director; Admission & Student Accounts Manager; and designated marketing and communications, finance, human resources, facilities, food service, technology, and other personnel, directly or through designated supervisors under the approved organization. Academic leadership titles and final reporting lines will reflect school needs. The Head remains accountable for delegated work.

Member of

Chairs the leadership team and coordinates shared planning and communication across departments. Participates in Board and school committees as provided in the bylaws, Board policy, and approved organization.

Faith Community Affairs

- Models Catholic faith and articulates the mission and charism of Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Ensures programs, personnel practices, policies, resource decisions, and communications reflect that mission.
- In collaboration with the chaplain, academic leaders, and current sponsor, leads staff mission formation and supports Board formation. Works with academic and religious education personnel to ensure quality religious education and integration of faith and learning.
- Participates personally in school faith life. Through the chaplain, clergy, and designated staff, oversees prayer, liturgy, retreats, sacraments, and service programs. Encourages students, families, staff, alumni, and benefactors to participate and models Catholic social teaching, dignity, and justice.
- Partners with Native families, elders, and community leaders to honor Navajo language, culture, and perspectives while sustaining Catholic identity and respecting the religious backgrounds of students and families.
- Works with the Board to review the school's mission and educational philosophy and establish goals responsive to students and the community. Ensures personnel selection and school communications support Catholic identity.

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Academic Affairs

- Serves as the school's overall educational leader. In collaboration with academic leaders and faculty, develops a shared PK–12 academic vision informed by families, students, and community partners and rooted in Catholic mission and Native heritage.
- Ensures academic policies are developed, communicated, and implemented; reviews program quality and compliance with applicable academic and accreditation requirements. Keeps abreast of developments in Catholic education and effective instructional practice.
- In consultation with academic leaders and human resources personnel, selects, supervises, evaluates, and retains qualified instructional personnel and makes employment decisions within delegated authority and approved budgets.
- Directs formative and summative faculty evaluation through classroom observation, clear rubrics, and documented evidence. Works with academic leaders to connect evaluation with coaching, individual professional growth plans, and consistent follow-through.
- Works with academic leaders and faculty representatives to plan meetings and professional development, hear faculty concerns, and address instructional and workplace needs.
- Through academic leaders, department heads, and designated staff:
 - Aligns curriculum mapping, scope and sequence, instruction, and assessment with the academic vision and a coherent progression across grades.
 - Maintains current curriculum guides, course expectations, syllabi, and graduation requirements; coordinates textbook and instructional-material selection and regular course evaluation.
 - Uses student work and assessment results to improve programs, provide enrichment and intervention, and prepare students for further education, work, service, and community leadership.
 - Oversees the master schedule, testing calendar, student records, grade reporting, counseling, learning support, and student transition planning.
 - Coordinates department meetings, instructional technology integration, training for faculty and students, and regular communication with families about learning and progress.
- Leads Cognia accreditation in conjunction with designated school personnel, including self-study, site visits, required reports, and implementation of improvement recommendations. Coordinates funded educational programs, including Title programs where applicable, with instructional needs and reporting obligations.

Student Affairs

- Ensures student affairs policies and programs support Catholic mission, student development, and a safe, welcoming culture. Works with student life leaders to integrate arts, athletics, service, clubs, and other activities into the educational experience.
- In consultation with responsible leaders and human resources personnel, selects, supervises, evaluates, and retains student life personnel, coaches, and activity advisors within approved staffing and budgets.
- Through student life leaders, club advisors, and designated staff:
 - Oversees planning and coordination of activities, assignments for adult supervision, and appropriate standards of conduct and participation.
 - Oversees attendance and discipline records, reviews the student and family handbook annually, and coordinates the school activities calendar with academic and operational needs.
 - Supports restorative practices and trauma-informed approaches and ensures regular communication with caregivers concerning student well-being.
- Through the Athletic Director and athletics staff:
 - Oversees planning and coordination of sports, coaching development, scheduling, facilities use, and athletics events.

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- Ensures clear eligibility policies, professional expectations for coaches, appropriate supervision, and compliance with applicable athletic association requirements.
- Makes student discipline and enrollment decisions, including suspension and expulsion, within delegated authority and established review and appeal procedures, in consultation with responsible personnel.
- Ensures child protection, safe-environment training, and appropriate response and reporting procedures across programs. Coordinates safety and emergency planning with operations leaders and administrative coverage for school events; maintains a visible presence in school life.

Development and Advancement Affairs

- In collaboration with the Director of Advancement and Board, ensures development and implementation of a comprehensive advancement plan supporting the school's image, enrollment, annual operations, financial assistance, capital priorities, and long-term resources.
- Supervises, supports, and evaluates the Director of Advancement; works with advancement staff through that director. Reviews and approves major fundraising initiatives within delegated authority and connects the case for support to approved strategic priorities.
- Participates personally in identifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors in conjunction with the Director of Advancement and Board members.
- Serves as principal spokesperson. Works with designated marketing and communications personnel on schoolwide messaging, public and media relations, and the annual report, coordinating priorities with academic, advancement, enrollment, athletics, and operational leaders.
- Through designated marketing and communications personnel, oversees the website, social media, publications, and promotional materials for departmental needs. Ensures coordinated content planning, consistent branding, timely updates, and accurate, mission-aligned messages for school audiences.
- Through the Director of Advancement and staff:
 - Coordinates annual giving, major and planned gifts, grants, fundraising events, and capital campaigns appropriate to the school's priorities and capacity.
 - Collaborates with marketing and communications personnel on fundraising and donor materials within the schoolwide communications plan.
 - Develops local and national alumni and donor relationships, encourages involvement, and ensures timely gift acknowledgment, donor communication, and stewardship reporting.
 - Maintains accurate donor and gift records; coordinates restricted gifts and grant reporting with finance personnel; and evaluates results against established goals.
- Ensures fundraising and communications represent Native communities, students, and families with dignity and communicate the school's mission and educational impact.

Enrollment Management

- With the Admission & Student Accounts Manager, academic leaders, advancement, and marketing and communications personnel, leads an integrated recruitment, admissions, retention, and marketing plan reflecting mission, program quality, capacity, and affordability.
- Through the Admission & Student Accounts Manager and designated staff:
 - Coordinates inquiries, applications, visits, prospective-family communication, and admissions processes for new and transferring students.
 - Builds referral relationships with schools, parishes, and community partners; coordinates recruitment campaigns, admissions materials, and events with advancement and marketing and communications personnel.
 - Maintains student accounts and coordinates tuition collection and financial assistance administration with finance personnel under approved policies and budgets.

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- Reviews admissions recommendations with academic and enrollment personnel and ensures decisions follow established criteria. Uses enrollment, withdrawal, retention, and family feedback data to inform program improvement, staffing, and financial planning.

Business Affairs and Operational Vitality

- Provides overall leadership for operational vitality, responsible stewardship, and appropriate financial reporting to the Board and other authorities. Ensures business policies are communicated and implemented across academic, athletic, co-curricular, and advancement programs.
- In collaboration with finance and business leaders and the Board's finance committee, develops operating and capital budgets and a multiyear financial plan. Secures required approvals and aligns enrollment, fundraising, staffing, and facilities assumptions with strategic priorities.
- Works with academic leaders, the Athletic Director, and other department leaders to prepare program and departmental budgets and review financial performance.
- Through internal finance and business leaders, and any externally contracted professional service providers, in coordination with human resources and the Admission & Student Accounts Manager:
 - Monitors cash flow, revenue, expenses, and budget performance; provides regular Board reports and departmental budget-to-actual reports with explanations of significant variances and recommended action.
 - Maintains accurate accounting, separation of duties, internal controls, and required financial reviews or audits.
 - Oversees payroll, employee benefits, purchasing, liability and property insurance, and contracts that obligate the school.
 - Oversees tuition collection and financial assistance funds and ensures compliance with gift restrictions, grant conditions, and reporting obligations.
- Works with the Board, advancement, finance, and the Buildings and Grounds Manager on short- and long-range capital improvement and preventive maintenance priorities.
- Through the Buildings and Grounds Manager, Food Service Manager, and transportation and technology personnel, ensures safe, clean facilities and dependable services. Oversees technology infrastructure for instruction and business, information security, records management, and confidentiality.
- Coordinates emergency preparedness, drills, crisis response, and continuity planning. Works with human resources personnel to implement employment policies, handbooks and applicable requirements; obtains qualified advice for legal, contractual, and compliance matters and maintains required reporting and records.

Personnel Leadership and School Culture

- Works with academic, human resources, and departmental leaders on personnel selection, development, and retention; aligns staffing and compensation with educational quality, mission, and financial health.
- Works with human resources and supervisors to establish job descriptions, faculty and staff handbooks, onboarding, goals, and evaluation for all personnel. Evaluates direct reports and supports supervisors in providing feedback, recognizing contributions, and managing performance and professional growth.
- Applies personnel policies and performance expectations fairly and consistently, using established procedures for evaluation, improvement, and any warranted exceptions.
- Builds on the strengths of the existing team and develops emerging leaders. Shares meaningful decision authority with clear responsibilities, resources, coaching, and accountability; aligns delegated work with staff capacity and sustains a collaborative culture of trust and follow-through.

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Community Engagement

- Inspires constituents and stakeholders to advance the mission of the school. Invites families, local and distant alumni, elders, and community and professional partners to contribute time, talent, cultural knowledge, relationships, service, and financial resources.
- Creates volunteer, mentoring, advisory, and school improvement opportunities, with appropriate preparation, coordination, recognition, and follow-up.
- Builds trust through accessible communication, regular listening, and respectful dialogue. Encourages broad participation, communicates how community input informs decisions, and follows through on agreed priorities.
- Maintains constructive relationships with the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Church authorities, tribal and community leaders, and educational partners, consistent with school governance and sponsorship arrangements.

Board Relations and Strategic Leadership

- Serves as the principal administrative liaison between the Board and school community. Presents timely issues, recommendations, and reports and supports Board orientation, continuing governance education, and committee work consistent with the bylaws.
- Partners with the Board to articulate a compelling future and lead inclusive strategic planning. With functional leaders, coordinates supporting plans for academics, finances, facilities, advancement, enrollment, and communications, with assigned responsibilities, resources, timelines, and measurable goals.
- Reports regularly on the state of the school, implementation of strategic and accreditation improvement plans, financial health, and significant risks. Recommends priorities for growth and development and communicates progress to the school's constituents.
- Maintains the distinction between Board governance and school administration and implements approved policies and decisions.

Qualifications

- Practicing Catholic in good standing with the Roman Catholic Church, committed to Catholic education and able to lead the school's mission and founding charism.
- Master's degree in education, educational leadership, or a related field. A graduate degree in business or nonprofit leadership must be accompanied by demonstrated preparation and successful experience in instructional leadership.
- At least five years of successful educational leadership, including curriculum and instruction, faculty supervision and evaluation, and school improvement; demonstrated results in teaching and learning and developing effective teams.
- Demonstrated ability to lead complex operations, manage budgets, implement strategic priorities, and cultivate, solicit, and steward philanthropic support.
- Strategic, visionary, and approachable, with integrity, warmth, and sound judgment; able to inspire confidence, engage stakeholders, make difficult decisions, and pair shared authority with accountability.
- Commitment to culturally responsive leadership and respectful partnership with Native communities. Knowledge of Navajo language and cultural protocols, or willingness to learn in partnership with the community, is preferred.
- Holds or is eligible to obtain the Arizona school administrator credential specified by the school. Experience in Catholic, independent, PK-12, or Native-serving schools and in accreditation, enrollment, grants, and advancement is preferred.