

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER SEARCH

ST. STEPHEN'S AND ST. AGNES SCHOOL

Alexandria, Virginia

sssas.org

Start Date: July 1, 2025



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

To help students succeed in a complex and changing world, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School seeks to inspire a passion for learning, an enthusiasm for athletic and artistic endeavor, a striving for excellence, a celebration of diversity, and a commitment to service.

The school's mission is to pursue goodness as well as knowledge and to honor the unique value of each of its members as a child of God in a caring community.

At a Glance



Established
1924



Overall Enrollment
1,219



Total faculty
148



Student-faculty ratio
8:1



Students of color
30%



Financial assistance budget
\$7.4+M



Faculty with advanced degrees
76%



Annual operating budget
\$56M

Lower School: 461
Middle School: 293
Upper School: 465
Faculty of color: 19.6%

Students receiving aid: 19%
Endowment and Board Designated Funds: \$45M
\$29M Endowment
\$16M Board Designated Funds



Overview

St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School (SSSAS) is situated on three well-appointed, purpose-built campuses in Alexandria, one for each division, SSSAS maintains a visible and well-respected place in the competitive greater Washington, D.C., independent school market. It is the largest of six schools that are part of the Church Schools in the Diocese of Virginia and enjoys a strong relationship with those schools and the CSDV.

The 2024-2025 school year marks the 100th anniversary of St. Agnes School's founding. SSSAS has a long tradition of providing an excellent college preparatory education in Northern Virginia. Beginning as two separate, notable institutions —St. Agnes School (SAS) and St. Stephen's School (SSS)— the schools merged their long-standing partnership in 1991 to form a single co-educational school, first led by the then St. Agnes School Head, Joan Ogilvy Holden, and since 2014 by the current Head of School, Kirsten Adams.

Now, SSSAS is seeking a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with an entrepreneurial outlook to provide strategic thinking and build relationships that facilitate “dreaming big.” The CFO will work closely with successful and long-serving Head of School, Kirsten Adams, the board, the school foundation, and CSDV as a thought partner to improve all aspects of what is already a large and highly successful school. Building relationships of trust within the school community will be a key driver of success, as will strong speaking and presenting skills and a desire to think ambitiously.



Opportunities and Challenges

The next CFO of SSSAS will succeed a respected individual with a long tenure at the School. They will join a convivial and healthy school environment where everyone involved is focused on providing the best education possible for their students and ensuring the long-term viability of the school. As mentioned, the Head of School, Kirsten Adams, is well regarded by all constituents and has a clear vision for the school. Kirsten possesses a genuine desire for a partner to join her high-functioning leadership team and provide strategic guidance through the lens of finance. The CFO will also partner closely with a board that shares in the Head's vision, as well as the CDSV which oversees six schools in Virginia and provides a built-in team of talented colleagues at those other schools to provide counsel and support.

SSSAS has focused energies on school wide collaboration and innovation and the next CFO is expected to continue to partner with colleagues. These relationships include, but are not limited to:

- Increased collaboration with the Chief Advancement Officer and their team to enhance the culture of giving at the school. Part of this effort would be developing additional examples and opportunities to demonstrate the impact of philanthropy on the school. The CFO may be called on to speak at meetings and events, sharing financial information and strategy with prospective donors to bolster the case for support.
- The partnership between the CFO and the Chief Operations Officer is vital to create an atmosphere that drives ambitious thinking about campus planning and implementation.
- Strong collaboration with the Chief Technology Officer will be necessary to continue to develop a culture and structure for meaningful data collection and analysis that can be used to better inform short and long-term thinking.

Additional opportunities to make an impact will include participating in the execution of a nearly completed strategic plan, contributing to discussions about newly acquired land adjacent to one of their campuses, and working on initiatives to evaluate and enhance faculty and staff compensation and benefits.



The Business Office has many long-serving team members, including an experienced controller. There are several projects for the next CFO to lead, including improving the collection, analysis, and utilization of data, communication between departments, and modernizing practices and programs within the Business Office. The CFO oversees the school’s HR program and will provide mentorship and support to the Director of Human Resources as they continue to strengthen HR practices.

Responsibilities

In addition to embracing St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School’s mission, supporting its Head and leadership, and representing the school at professional and public forums, the new CFO has a number of primary responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership, analysis, and management of finances and operations.
- Establish financial and capital strategies that are consistent with the strategic priorities.
- Serve on the Head of School’s Administrative Team and lead, co-lead, or participate in several other teams and committees.
- Oversee all business office functions including all financial reporting to the Head of School, Board of Trustees, and various committees.
- Serve as chief staff liaison to Board committees.
- Build and/or maintain the school’s short- and long-term strategic financial models.
- Oversee the administration of the school’s endowment.
- Maintain strong relationships with banks and lenders to ensure that funding is secured for the needs of the school and compliance with loan terms.
- Administer and manage all employee benefit programs including health insurance, retirement, worker’s compensation, life insurance, and other related plans.
- Ensure compliance with all local and state reporting requirements.
- Collaborate effectively with Advancement, Enrollment Management, and other departments.
- Participate in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging professional development.
- Coordinate closely with the Facilities Director on oversight of the physical plant, grounds, and construction functions.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

- Bachelor's degree required, MBA or CPA preferred;
- 10-15 years of senior-level experience creating and executing financial planning and management strategies;
- Experience in an independent school or other non-profit setting preferred, though individuals with strong financial and leadership skills in other industries are welcome;
- Experience managing a team, setting clear goals, responsibilities, expectations, and clear methods of accountability;
- Experience managing a team with both in-office and remote members, successfully creating cohesion among the team itself;
- Proven record of accomplishment designing, implementing, and managing large-scale organizational change;
- Superb communication skills; excellent written, verbal, and presentation skills;
- Demonstrated ability to understand complex subjects, distill them, and then communicate them to varied audiences;
- Experience on senior administrative teams and working with non-profit Boards;
- Demonstrated experience in measuring and improving organization-wide productivity;
- Demonstrated experience in the development of analysis for strategic decision-making, such as key cost drivers, competitive analysis, market analysis, organizational strengths, and weaknesses, etc.;
- Experience in human resource management, employee benefits (including pension plans), and payroll procedures. Knowledge of business and not-for-profit accounting policies, procedures, practices, facilities, and software programs. Blackbaud experience a plus;
- Ability to think and plan strategically and creatively;
- Ability to supervise, manage, and delegate multiple functions and activities;
- Ability to remain calm, flexible, and work effectively under pressure;
- Skilled at negotiating and initiating contracts with external vendors;
- Aptitude for high customer-service standards;
- Consistent demonstration of an entrepreneurial mindset;
- Demonstrated commitment to equitable and inclusive practices;
- A track record of strong integrity.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School.

[School Website](#)

[Strategic Plan](#)

[School History](#)

[About Alexandria, Virginia](#)

[Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A list of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

Greg Britton

Chief Operating Officer, Search & Consulting Group
ggb@carneysandoe.com

Sara Shulman

Practice Leader – Development and Finance
sara.shulman@carneysandoe.com

The school is an equal opportunity employer. The school provides equal employment opportunity to all employees and job applicants without regard to an individual's race, color, national origin, veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions including lactation, age, disability, genetic information or any other factor prohibited by applicable law.