



SHS

SACRED HEART SCHOOLS

ATHERTON

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Start Date: July 2027

Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton

Atherton, California | shschools.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton is an independent, Catholic school as interpreted and lived by the Society of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ).


SHS's mission and values cultivate in its students a personal and active faith in God and lay the foundation for a meaningful life.

At a Glance


 **1898**
established


 **1,196**
total enrollment

 **50%**
students of color

 **56%**
Catholic students

 **315**
total faculty & staff

 **84%**
faculty with
advanced degrees

 *average* **15:1**
student-faculty ratio



OVERVIEW

Serving just under 1,200 students and more than 900 families, Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton (SHS) is among the leading independent, Catholic schools in the country. The school is grounded in a mission, heritage, and educational vision established more than two centuries ago by the Religieuses du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus (Society of the Sacred Heart, RSCJ).

Founded in 1898 as the 13th North American Sacred Heart school, SHS is part of a global network spanning 41 countries. The Sacred Heart Goals—Faith, Intellect, Service, Community, and Growth—serve as the foundation of school culture and guide both strategic decision-making and daily life. These Goals are actively lived across the school, shaping curriculum, community life, and institutional decision making, and setting clear expectations for both student formation and the responsibilities of the community.

As an independent, Catholic school in the Sacred Heart tradition serving a religiously and culturally diverse community, SHS expects its next Director of Schools not only to steward this identity, but to actively interpret and advance it in ways that meaningfully shape student experience, community life, and institutional decision making. This includes the responsibility of leading a Catholic institution with clarity and confidence in a pluralistic environment.

What distinguishes SHS is the integration of a deeply rooted Sacred Heart identity with a rigorous academic program and a vibrant, mission-driven community, all within the dynamic and demanding context of Silicon Valley. This is a distinctive opportunity to lead a globally connected Catholic school with significant institutional strength in one of the most dynamic and high-expectation educational environments in the country.

Located on a 63-acre campus in the heart of Silicon Valley, SHS offers a mission-driven education from preschool through grade 12 within a community shaped by both the opportunities and pressures of its environment. The school prepares students to lead lives of purpose, compassion, and impact.

Over the past decade, SHS has completed three major capital campaigns, transformed its campus, strengthened faculty compensation and benefits, and built a \$133 million endowment. With this strong foundation in place, the next Director of Schools will be expected to sustain momentum, strengthen alignment, and lead with discipline and clarity while guiding SHS into its next chapter.

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Creating a safe and positive learning environment where students can take risks and learn from mistakes is crucial. This practice is deeply rooted in our commitment to preparing all students for life in a diverse and interconnected world, encouraging them to explore new ideas and perspectives in a supportive setting.

- WASC Self Study Report, 2025

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SACRED HEART GOALS

- A personal and active faith in God
- A deep respect for intellectual values
- A social awareness which impels to action
- The building of community as a Christian value
- Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom

WHAT DEFINES SHS

Whole Child Formation

At the center of an SHS education is the formation of the whole child—heart, mind, and soul. Guided by the Goals and Criteria, students are challenged to grow in integrity, resilience, empathy, and moral courage. The school is committed to meeting each student where they are and helping them develop both the capacity and the desire to lead lives of meaning and service.

Academic Excellence

SHS offers a rigorous college-preparatory program from its Montessori preschool through its high school, including honors and advanced placement coursework. Students are encouraged to think critically, engage multiple perspectives, and pursue deep understanding.

The school seeks to balance academic rigor with intellectual curiosity and student well-being, preparing graduates who are both high-achieving and deeply grounded. This requires actively shaping a school culture in which rigor and achievement are balanced with reflection, purpose, and well-being, ensuring that the pursuit of excellence remains aligned with the formation of the whole child.

Robust support systems, including the Academic Support Center and a highly regarded college counseling program, ensure that each student is challenged and supported.





Dynamic Co-Curricular Experience

SHS provides a wide range of co-curricular opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom. Programs such as Creative Inquiry and Senior Honors Independent Study allow students to pursue independent, project-based work aligned with their interests.

The school's comprehensive arts and athletics programs are central to student life and development, fostering creativity, discipline, teamwork, and resilience, and reflecting the same commitment to excellence found in the classroom. These experiences are integral to student development and reinforce the school's commitment to educating the whole child.

Service Learning and Social Awareness

Service Learning is central to the SHS experience and reflects the Sacred Heart commitment to social awareness that impels to action. Through a progression of age-appropriate opportunities, students engage in meaningful service, reflection, and community partnership.

These experiences connect intellectual, spiritual, and social development, forming students who are both aware of and responsive to the needs of others.

Community

SHS is a deeply engaged community, reflecting a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and faith traditions. Rooted in the Sacred Heart commitment to community as a Christian value, the school fosters a culture of belonging, respect, and shared responsibility.

Students, families, faculty, staff, alumni, and the Religious of the Sacred Heart all contribute to a community that is both welcoming and enduring. The result is a strong sense of connection and loyalty that extends well beyond graduation.

A Living Sacred Heart Tradition: Oakwood

Unique within the global Sacred Heart network, SHS is home to Oakwood, where 48 retired Religious of the Sacred Heart reside at the physical and spiritual center of campus.

Their presence is not symbolic. It is vibrant, relational, and deeply woven into daily school life. Through interactions in classrooms, liturgies, and community gatherings, the RSCJ animate the Society's charism and provide students with a direct and meaningful connection to the school's founding tradition.

This intergenerational community is a distinctive and defining feature of SHS, grounding the school's mission in lived experience.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At a pivotal moment in its history, Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton seeks a Director of Schools who can build on a strong foundation while leading with clarity, strong communication, discipline, and execution. Guided by the Goals and Criteria of the Sacred Heart tradition and working closely with the leadership team, Board of Trustees, and Society of the Sacred Heart, the next Director will focus on the following priorities. While each of these areas is important, several stand out as particularly critical in the near term.

Lead, interpret, and advance SHS's Catholic and Sacred Heart identity in a contemporary context

Ensure that the school's Catholic and Sacred Heart identity is actively lived across all aspects of the institution, shaping student experience, community life, and institutional decision making. This includes leading the ongoing expression of the Sacred Heart charism in ways that are visible, relational, and integrated into the daily life of the school, and not experienced as merely rhetorical. The Director is called not only to steward this identity, but to meaningfully shape and deepen its expression within the community, including the responsibility of leading a Catholic school within a pluralistic and diverse environment.

Lead the school through a significant leadership transition while sustaining institutional trust

Build on a strong and deeply rooted foundation while establishing a clear leadership voice, strengthening relationships, and guiding the community through a period of continuity and evolution. The next Director will also be expected to identify emerging opportunities and gaps, bringing both fresh perspective and disciplined execution to a complex and evolving institution.



Lead with disciplined execution and alignment

Partner with the leadership team to advance the school's priorities through clear focus, strong coordination, and consistent execution across divisions. Build on an already strong institutional foundation, sustain momentum, and ensure a cohesive preschool through grade 12 experience while allowing the next chapter of leadership to take shape.

Sustain academic excellence while navigating evolving expectations for student experience

Advance a rigorous and relevant academic program while navigating evolving expectations around student wellness, belonging, and purpose, particularly within a high-achieving community, while maintaining a clear commitment to the development of the whole child.

This includes the responsibility of maintaining a clear and consistent articulation of what defines a Sacred Heart education within a high-achieving environment.

Advance access and affordability within a high-cost environment

Strengthen access and affordability while sustaining a socioeconomically diverse community and ensuring long-term financial sustainability. This includes balancing access and affordability, faculty and staff compensation and retention, and the strategic use of resources in a high-cost region. Operating in the context of Silicon Valley, the Director must also navigate the pressures of a high-achieving, high-expectation environment with deeply engaged families and stakeholders, while maintaining alignment with the school's mission and values.

Strengthen organizational alignment and leadership capacity

Enhance coordination, clarity of roles, decision making, and accountability across a complex organization, supporting a high-performing leadership team and fostering a unified, one-school culture. This work will require navigating competing priorities and making difficult, and at times competing, decisions in service of the school's long-term strength and mission.

Lead thoughtful and mission-aligned engagement with emerging technologies

Guide a mission-aligned approach to innovation, including artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies, with a focus on ethics, human formation, and student development.



\$9.1M

tuition assistance
awarded



25%

students receiving
tuition assistance



\$133M

endowment



\$75M

annual operating
budget



63 acres

campus footprint

LEADERSHIP TRANSITION & QUALITIES

Following a long and impactful tenure of the current Director of Schools, SHS enters a period of meaningful transition. The next leader will be expected to sustain momentum, build on a strong foundation, and lead with clarity and discipline while establishing their own leadership voice and direction. The next Director will also be expected to identify and address emerging opportunities and challenges, bringing both fresh perspective and disciplined execution to the role.

The community seeks a leader who is relational, grounded, and capable of building trust across a diverse and deeply engaged set of stakeholders, while also bringing the clarity and conviction needed to lead forward.



Desired Qualifications and Attributes

- A committed Catholic who is comfortable visibly leading within the traditions and sacramental life of the Church in a school setting, while honoring the diversity of the broader SHS community
- Significant leadership experience, ideally 10+ years in roles of increasing responsibility within complex, mission-driven organizations
- Demonstrated strength in strategic, financial, and operational leadership, including experience working with boards, managing resources, and executing institutional priorities
- A proven ability to build trust and lead effectively across a multi-stakeholder environment, with a collaborative, relational, and visible leadership style
- A clear and compelling communicator, able to articulate vision, mission, and priorities with clarity and authenticity
- A decisive and thoughtful leader, capable of making and standing behind difficult decisions in service of the school's long-term success
- A commitment to developing people and teams, fostering accountability, and sustaining a culture of excellence

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)
- [School History](#)
- [Goals and Criteria](#)
- [Purpose and Legacy](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access](#)
- [School Profile](#)
- [About Atherton, California](#)



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United in our mission and as one community, we are privileged to work with young people, guiding them to discover a Sacred love for themselves through their experience of being loved by us. Now more than ever, our world needs students educated in the Sacred Heart, who move through life with a sense of purpose and a confidence rooted in truth, love, and freedom. In this spirit, they will transform our world, so that justice, mercy, and peace may prevail.

- Sacred Heart Educator

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TO APPLY

The Director of Schools reports to the Board of Trustees, serves as the school's CEO and is responsible for fostering a climate of excellence and moral development among students, faculty, and staff. The Board welcomes candidates from Independent schools (preferably with K-12 experience), colleges and universities as well as other mission-driven organizations such as non-profit foundations and charities; or the corporate, civic, and professional services arenas.

This is an exceptional opportunity to lead a highly regarded independent school with an unwavering commitment to student success and an enduring grounding in its Sacred Heart identity.

The base salary range for the Director of Schools role is \$600,000 - \$800,000; and will take into consideration the alignment of the candidate's experience and expertise with the needs of Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton.

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:

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