



The Bishop's School



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

THE BISHOP'S SCHOOL

La Jolla, California

July 2019

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates should send a:

- Cover letter explaining interest in The Bishop's School
- An up-to-date C.V.
- A writing sample (not to exceed two pages) that could be a personal statement, an article for a school publication, the text of a talk, a letter—just something that helps inform us about the candidate's interests or experience.

These items should be sent **in a single PDF** to both:

dereed2014@gmail.com and
tom@tomhudnut.com

Thank you so much.

Debbie Reed and Tom Hudnut

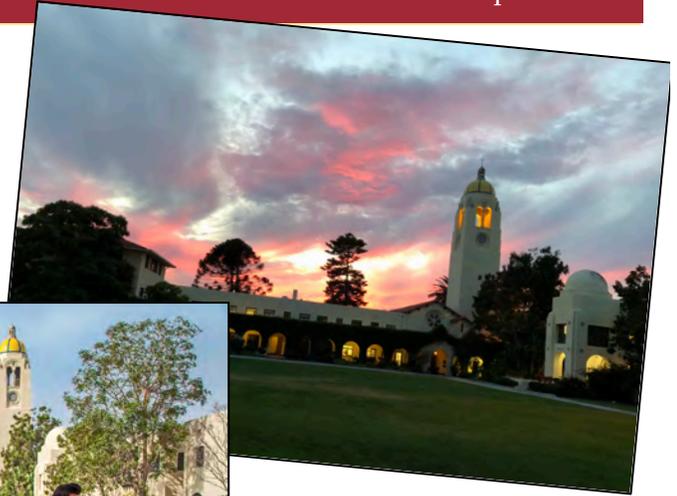


THE PROLOGUE

Founded and funded in 1909 by Ellen Browning Scripps, The Bishop's School was unusual for its time and place. As one biographer has written, "Miss Scripps' principles were straightforward. She believed in education and free speech, she was an advocate of women's suffrage and women's clubs, biology interested her, she abhorred discrimination and privilege, she favored temperance and world peace."

More than a century later, Miss Scripps would be proud to know that those principles continue to animate Bishop's just as they did when she established them as the foundation of her school. She might be surprised, however, by the size and vibrancy of what is now a grade 6-12 coed school with 800 students, a tremendous sports program, and service activities galore. She would thrill to the opportunities in the visual and performing arts and doubtless be astounded by the depth and breadth of what students can accomplish in the sciences, robotics, computer science and engineering as the school has kept pace with the times.

To learn more about
The Bishop's School:
www.bishops.com



THE PLACE

La Jolla (“the jewel” in Spanish) is indeed a gem aside the Pacific Ocean, featuring one of the fairest climates in the world, views that seem to extend forever, a 365-day growing season, and a quality of life that would be difficult to surpass. Not far from La Jolla Cove—indeed, within sight of it—lies the historic landmark Bishop’s campus, an 11-acre island with a blend of historic and contemporary buildings that ring a large and central grass quadrangle. The campus is studded with architecture largely designed by Irving Gill and alive with flora: from palms to pines, camellias to roses, expansive lawns and a horticulture plan that minimizes water use, the overall feeling is one of an embrace. The prevailing ambience is that of a serene, small college town with students and faculty coming and going across the Quad, small study groups at work, and other students relaxing on strategically placed benches; it is nothing short of idyllic.

San Diego is a fast-growing metropolitan area filled with high-tech industries that didn’t exist a generation ago; three outstanding universities; the finest climate of any city its size in the world; cultural phenomena that range from the Old Globe Theatre to the museums of Balboa Park to the world-famous San Diego Zoo; spectator sports including major league baseball, college football and world-class horse racing in nearby Del Mar; and a deep-water port that is home to a number of transpacific ships.

It is an area where people live much of their life out of doors, as evidenced by the many beaches, tennis courts, and golf courses that dot the county. San Diego is also, of course, a major port of the U.S. Navy and home to many retired military whose “can do” approach to life nicely complements the go-go atmosphere of high-tech and venture capital.

THE PEOPLE

“Passionate and curious” are fitting adjectives for both the students and their teachers. There is an ethos of “intellectual curiosity, kindness, generosity of spirit, and care for others” that flows throughout the school: the students are uniformly thoughtful and kind. They are spontaneously polite, mannerly and well spoken. A group of middle schoolers having lunch with a visitor recently all shook hands, introduced themselves, cleared their places, and said, “Thank you,” all without prompting! Backpacks left hither and yon suggest a climate of security in which no one would ever take another’s property. Clubs, affinity groups, and student publications all reflect an environment that is both trusting of student interests and rewarding of student initiative. The opportunities to lead are plentiful.

Students willingly tell a visitor that there are seemingly no limits to what they can learn at Bishop's. As one student put it, "You can be a nerd and be happy at Bishop's," which led another to chime in, "Or be an athlete or a dancer." There are numbers of ways for such comfort to be transmitted to a student, but tradition plays a strong part at Bishop's. From singing carols and drinking hot cocoa at the annual Christmas Tree Lighting to each class having its own colors and mascot to the senior lawn and the senior rec room, students are subtly reminded every day that they are part of a continuum of learners stretching back over a century.



Bishop's students attend weekly services in St. Mary's Chapel. The school's Episcopal chaplain presides and students regularly participate in pluralistic services, whose aims are to be welcoming to both the individual and the community, spiritually meaningful and morally substantive, intellectually thoughtful, service-oriented, and reliant upon ritual.



Doubtless much of the students' generosity of spirit comes from their teachers. Students' lives are changed at Bishop's by faculty who care about them and who routinely keep in frequent touch with graduates or their families, decades after graduation. Meaningful relationships matter here. There is an ethos of kindness that runs through the faculty that does not make them any less demanding, but it does indicate an understanding of what being an adolescent is all about. There is no sense that teachers are "out to get" their students, as one finds in some schools. There has been a noticeable shift in recent years away from "stand-and-deliver" teaching toward a more participatory form of pedagogy that students recognize and appreciate. Faculty across all disciplines use Harkness-style teaching. The faculty have adopted a new schedule, revised the school calendar, and recalibrated the timing of academic reports, all as part of the effort to reduce student stress and improve communication.





THE PROGRAM

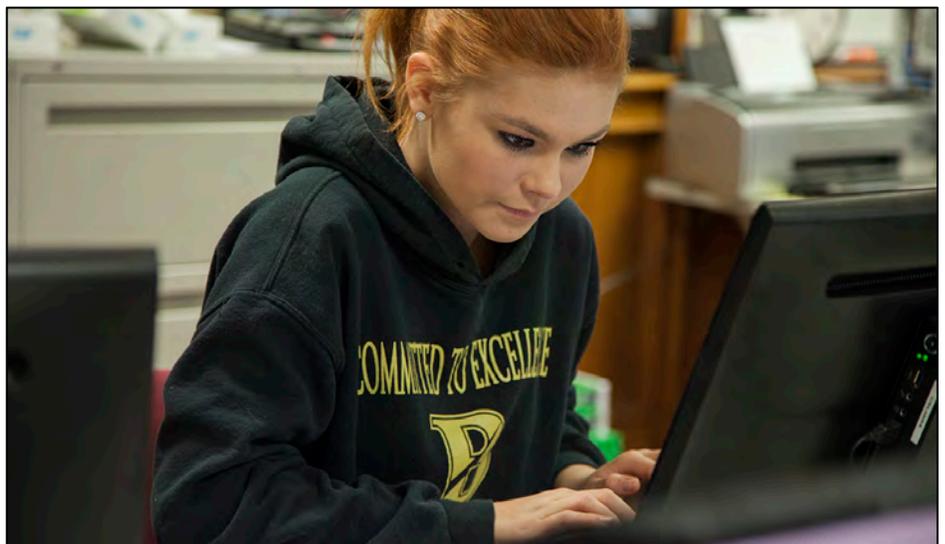
A prior head of school used to state with frequency that Bishop's is about "academics, academics, academics." While that might conjure up images of a dour, shoulder-to-the-wheel school, such is not the case, though it definitely is the case that a rigorous curriculum is at the core of the Bishop's experience. Advanced level-and-beyond classes are present in every academic department and the academic zeal of students and faculty alike is noteworthy. Excellence in every academic department is the norm. "Limitless opportunity" is a phrase often heard around Bishop's and it refers both to the curriculum and to the chance that all students have to participate in the full breadth of the overall program—sports, service, arts, publications, internships and university-level research positions that involve nearly all the students in the school.

Thanks to the work of the current head of school and an ongoing workload initiative, many faculty now have four classes with their "fifth" class devoted to planning and collaborating. Traditional silos,

while still in existence, are breaking down inevitably as interdisciplinary teaching comes to the fore. There are grade-level teams in the middle school, replacing the traditional departmental set-up and ensuring increased interdepartmental collaboration. In addition to pedagogical change, there is considerable interest among faculty in 21st century education as they define it, with the four pillars being global education, sustainability, diversity and community life, and service learning. There is excitement surrounding the idea that these pillars can be worked into curricula, becoming components of daily learning as a matter of

course. Coupled with these overtures is a generalized desire to integrate a required international travel component into classes where appropriate. Because faculty have a good deal of latitude within their departments to determine course content, there is every reason to think that this can and will happen.

The curriculum tends toward the traditional, although most departments are wrestling with the idea of getting away from Advanced Placement courses in favor of ones designed by faculty that will still permit students to excel on the exams. A recent gift of \$6 million for interdisciplinary STEM innovations will inevitably have an impact on the overall course of study. Regardless of the specific changes that may come about, there is overall commitment to maintaining the student-centered approach to teaching and learning that characterizes the Bishop's pedagogy. The aim, according to the head of school, is to build "citizens who will contribute their talents to the contemporary world in transformative ways."



Complementing the strong academic program at Bishop's are commensurately strong offerings in athletics and the arts. Few schools in Southern California can rival the success of Bishop's teams in sports across the board. In the fall season of 2017, every single varsity team made the Regional playoffs and most of them went deep. Most of those teams have progressed beyond the expected levels for a school Bishop's size and volleyball, football and water polo all compete in the most competitive division—nothing short of remarkable for a school its size. And for enthusiasts of other sports, there are surf, equestrian, sailing, and Ultimate Frisbee teams. Equally remarkable is the number of Bishop's graduates who go on to play at the intercollegiate level, a

surprising portion of whom play Division I sports.

More than 60% of upper school students participate in interscholastic sports and a slightly larger number are involved in the visual and performing arts, where there are at least as many offerings as there are in athletics. Dance, theatre, instrumental music, choral music, orchestra, and jazz are all offered at various grade levels and proficiency and are widely lauded by their student participants. In the fall of 2017, there were 12 major opportunities for student performance, ranging from Jane Austen to Shakespeare, student-choreographed dance, and concerts featuring the orchestra, jazz band, and choruses. It has been said that "if academics is the heart of a Bishop's education, then student life is its soul," and this is everywhere evident in the performing arts offerings, in

breadth and depth. It is equally the case for visual arts, with classes for students to explore media from sculpture to photography, both 2D and 3D design, studio art, and abundant opportunities to display their work ranging from the predictable (around campus) to the surprising (the Athenaeum Music and Art Library and the San Diego Museum of Art).

As students leave the scheduled part of the day, there are school publications, community outreach programs, and numerous clubs and organizations in which to be involved, including Model U.N., a support group for the wounded warriors, and a cybersecurity club. No one could ever say that Bishop's doesn't offer enough to its students! As one parent puts it, "The opportunities for students here are amazing and deep."

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Given the overwhelming support enjoyed by the school's Annual Giving drive, one can accurately infer that at least 95% of Bishop's parents are enthusiastic about the school and its direction. In a recent survey, parents had the opportunity to give anonymous voice to their thoughts and here's a sampling of their comments:

- "I've been pleasantly surprised by the wonderful work hard/play hard ethos at Bishop's and by the open-minded and progressive community."
- "We feel grateful every day that our children are here. They feel safe, loved, and know that someone cares about them."
- "The academic environment is challenging but supportive. Teachers and specialists are endlessly helpful."
- "The adults at the school extend a lot of grace to their students."
- "People are proud to be here."





deferred giving and gift planning for years. With such strong financial management in place, it is no wonder that the school operates in the black and has for years. Comparable strength exists

made. With the current middle school head set to serve next year as the Interim Head of School before her retirement, an educated guess is that these issues will be addressed prior to the next head's arrival.

Depending on one's point of view, the next 18 months bring a remarkable opportunity to assess the school's next chapter as Bishop's undertakes a head of school search, a CAIS/WASC self-study and accreditation visit, and the creation of a new strategic plan. The leadership team at Bishop's thinks of this as a great opportunity for useful self-examination; enthusiasm and optimism abound. Such an unusual confluence also allows the board of trustees to take a good look at its composition and governance practices. It's a very large board—31—but a working board and one that will take advantage of this occasion to evaluate both its workings and the school's mission.

There are numerous ways for parents to become involved, either as participants in the Parents' Association, or perhaps as grade level parents, working on the annual (and wildly successful) Auction, helping out with admissions open houses, and volunteering to assist the Annual Giving drive. If the leaders of the Parents' Association are in any way indicative of the broader sense of commitment to Bishop's, then this is a remarkably privileged school! Even when parents might desire change or have even a strong difference of opinion, they wouldn't dream of their children being anywhere else. When asked why her child is at the school, one mother said simply, "Bishop's is the best."

in admissions, athletics, and campus maintenance (the place is always beautifully kept up), and the college counseling program is comprehensive and highly successful.

On the academic front, the team is also strong with a middle school head, upper school head, academic dean, and dean of students. Because there is some ambiguity in the delineation of administrative responsibilities, one hears a complaint among faculty that decisions "take forever" to get

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

The school's administrative team is very solid. Long-serving chief advancement and chief financial officers bring immense institutional knowledge to their jobs and are tremendously successful. Bishop's raises money to a degree that is envied by other schools in California and has been a leader in



FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING

Bishop's is in great shape on both fronts. The school operates in the black on a current budget of \$31 million backed by an endowment of over \$50 million. \$3.4 million is devoted this academic year to financial aid for roughly 17% of the student body. The school has incurred about \$30 million in debt, and as of 7/31/17, has a balance of \$21.3 million (mostly from tax-exempt bonds, with both fixed and variable pay-downs).

The school's solid financial footing is a result of the strong collaboration between the head and the business and advancement functions. The school is currently \$18 million toward its \$25 million endowment campaign goal. Bishop's enjoys robust support from its constituencies. (As an indicator, some 94% of school families had contributed to the Annual Fund by Thanksgiving break.)



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Defining and articulating Bishop's value proposition
- Improving communication both on campus and in the broader community
- Making best use of the \$6 million gift for STEM
- How to make working at Bishop's affordable for potential hires
- Recruiting faculty/staff from a variety of backgrounds and experiences
- Organizing the school leadership to share responsibility and authority while continuing to reduce the direct reports to, and demands on, the head of school

THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL WILL LIKELY BE SOMEONE WHO:

- Possesses unquestioned integrity
- Takes evident joy in the diverse aspects of the job
- Is skilled at fundraising
- Appreciates collaboration—putting teams together and working with them
- Speaks and writes clearly and passionately and presents well to groups
- Enjoys being out and about, visible and interacting with the community
- Has experience with 6-12 pedagogy and curriculum
- Views Bishop's more as a destination than as a way-station
- Has the diplomatic skills and finesse to deal with occasionally fractious members of the school family
- Wants to be part of the extended Bishop's family and greater San Diego community
- Is comfortable with the school's Episcopal identity
- Encourages interdisciplinary teaching, student-centered learning, and is knowledgeable of the Harkness approach
- Enjoys being a part of an institution with a rich history and tradition