

RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL

Jacksonville, Florida

Coed / Day School / Pre-kindergarten – Grade 6 / Enrollment 528

www.rpds.com

HEAD OF SCHOOL

JULY 2008

THE SCHOOL

Almost sixty years ago, the founders of Riverside Presbyterian Day School had a vision to create a school offering a superior curriculum in academic subjects, affirm the teachings of the Christian faith, and nurture an awareness of God's unconditional love for every child. That vision is now a thriving institution with a mission to *educate the mind, nurture the spirit and foster the development of the whole child*. That heartfelt mission continues to guide the school today as RPDS equips and develops the next generation of servant leaders. Students gain an outstanding education, discover new talents, make lifelong friendships, develop a love of learning, and realize the power of their abilities through service and community. RPDS appreciates and honors the unique, God-given gifts inherent in each child. Faculty members seek to inspire and challenge students to achieve their highest potential in a warm, friendly and diverse family environment where teachers, students and parents participate in a partnership that enhances and strengthens student success. An active parent association coordinates parent involvement throughout the campus.

Founded in 1948 as a mission of Riverside Presbyterian Church, RPDS has grown from a modest beginning with nineteen students to a position of educational leadership in Jacksonville. Two Riverside Presbyterian Church leaders, Senior Pastor Dr. Albert Kissling and education committee chair J. Beatty Williams, founded RPDS and Jewell Swain served as Principal for the first twelve years. Suzanne Tomlinson, who served seventeen years as Head of School, strengthened academic and enrichment programs, emphasized professional development, and established a development office. A weekly chapel service was inaugurated and the curriculum expanded to include Art, Bible and computer science. Robert Littell has successfully served as Head of School since 1994, and will retire from RPDS in 2008. During his tenure, Robert increased enrollment and diversity while lowering class size, expanded classroom and athletic space, increased faculty compensation, and helped to lead a \$9.3 million RPC-RPDS capital campaign. Robert leaves RPDS in a thriving state as the school community plans to welcome its seventh Head of School.



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The school's 528 students follow a carefully planned academic program in an environment where respect for the individual, the community and Christian values are promoted and celebrated. With a student teacher ratio of 9:1, RPDS provides the finest primary education possible, nurturing children to be caring, responsible citizens, fostering self-esteem and ethical values, and encouraging creative and critical thinking. Embracing the philosophy that childhood is a journey not a race, students receive individualized attention as they demonstrate readiness for higher learning. In the most recent year, there were 130 applicants to RPDS, and over 98% of those offered admission enrolled. Please see the detailed curriculum guide on the school web site, <http://www.rpds.com/index.php/academics/curriculum/>.

The staff includes 7 administrators, 31 faculty members, 15 resource teachers, and 10 aides. Guided by caring adults, students learn authentic leadership by serving one another and the broader community. Students at every grade level engage in various community service programs. In addition, students in the upper grades serve as Kindergarten aides in the Early Learning Center, patrols during student arrival, library aides in the Media Center, and chapel guides for the Thursday chapel services and assemblies. These service programs overlap strong academics, proficiency in writing and experience with public speaking to provide students the opportunity to demonstrate leadership, responsibility, Christian values and community, laying the foundation for higher levels of servant leadership in the future.

The campus is 9.3 acres, with over 56,000 square feet of indoor space. The Kissling Building, which was opened in 1958, includes classrooms and an auditorium. The Williams Building, dedicated in November 1977, houses classrooms, the media center, the Kruger Computer Center, the music lab and administrative and general offices. The most recent building project was the Extended Day facility, which was completed in 2005. The Oak Street Plaza will be completed in fall 2007 to provide additional pre-K play space, green space and outdoor fellowship space in the heart of the campus. Located in the historic Five-Points area, RPDS is just minutes from downtown Jacksonville.



The RPDS endowment is valued at \$3.4 million, plus \$310,000 in invested operating reserve. The primary focus of the Endowment is to support need-based financial aid in order to maintain financial diversity at the school. The annual operating budget for the 2006-2007 year is \$4.02 million. RPDS carries no debt. In addition to the invested operating reserve, there is a \$600,000 cash operating reserve, targeted each year to 15% of operating expenses. Annual giving in the last year totaled \$265,700, of which over \$100,000 was undesignated. Forty-two percent of parents and twelve percent of alumni participated in giving. The most recent capital campaign (1997-2002) raised \$9.3 million.



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JACKSONVILLE

Twenty-five miles south of the Georgia border, Jacksonville is centered on the banks of the St. Johns River, which flows to the Atlantic 20 miles east of downtown. Founded in 1791 as Cowford, Jacksonville was renamed in 1822 in honor of Andrew Jackson, Florida Territory's first military governor, and later U.S. President (1829-1837). Jacksonville is the third largest city on the East Coast, after New York City and Philadelphia, with an estimated population of 835,000 and over 1.3 million people in the metropolitan area. After incorporating with the county in 1968, Jacksonville became the largest city in the U.S. in land area with over 874 square miles. Jacksonville is the second largest port on the East Coast and the largest deepwater port in the south. The area's economy is well diversified between distribution, financial services, biomedical technology, consumer goods, information services, manufacturing, and other industries. According to Forbes.com, Jacksonville ranked in the top-ten U.S. cities to relocate to find a job. Riverside Presbyterian Day School is located in the Riverside-Avondale historic district, whose neighborhoods have the largest variety of architectural styles in Florida.

Jacksonville's hospital systems are unique for a city its size. St. Vincent's is a tertiary care medical center that draws patients from Georgia and Central Florida. Wolfson Children's Hospital and Nemours Clinic draw pediatric patients from the southeast and internationally. The University of Florida-Shands is a highly respected teaching hospital and the Mayo Clinic is a premier resource for medical care.

With many cultural amenities, and a warm small city atmosphere, Jacksonville is a welcoming place for families. The Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra plays in the Jacoby Symphony Hall on the St. Johns River. The Times-Union Center downtown is home to three theaters and hosts concerts, performances, and Broadway shows. Jacksonville is also home to a number of annual cultural events: the Jacksonville Jazz Festival in April, The Spring Music Fest featuring popular artists, Planetfest, featuring a variety of rock artists, and Springing the Blues, an outdoor blues festival held in Jacksonville Beach. Multi-cultural festivals take place throughout the year, celebrating the diversity of Jacksonville. The Florida Theater and Jacksonville Arena host major concert events year round.

Popular museums include the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens with a large collection of European and American paintings, as well as a world-renowned collection of early Meissen porcelain. The museum, one block from RPDS in the Riverside neighborhood on the bank of the St. Johns River, is surrounded by three acres of formal English and Italian style gardens. The Museum of Science and History, on Jacksonville's South Riverwalk, features three stories of hands-on science and local history exhibits, including the Alexander Brest Planetarium. The Centennial Hall at Edward Waters College, Florida's first black college, features the Obi-Scott-Umunna Collection of Central and West African masks, carved ivory and musical instruments. And the Alexander Brest Museum at Jacksonville University includes a collection of pre-Columbian artifacts from Mexico and Central and South America, Steuben glass, Danish porcelain, and oriental ivories.



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Jacksonville also hosts several sports teams including the NFL Jaguars, the minor league baseball Suns, and the Southern Professional Hockey League Barracudas. The football stadium, baseball park, and arena are located together in a centralized stadium complex downtown with both road and river access. The PGA Tournament Players Championship is held each May in nearby Ponte Vedra Beach, about 35 minutes away. The Greater Jacksonville Kingfish Tournament, held each July, is the largest kingfish tournament in the country, launched from Sisters Creek Marina on the Intercoastal Waterway just west of nearby Mayport, where the St. Johns River meets the Atlantic Ocean.

With average temperatures of nearly 80 degrees, Jacksonville residents appreciate the sunny, year-round climate. The city's downtown is built around the St. Johns River, lies minutes from the ocean, and the area offers year round golf, tennis, boating, fishing and cycling. Residents enjoy walking and hiking through the many ecological sanctuaries, park land, and ecological preserves. Jacksonville proudly boasts the largest urban park system in the country, with more than 73,000 designated acres, including the 46,000-acre Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, which includes coastal uplands and vast salt marshes, much of it best accessed by kayak. Jacksonville Beach offers swimming, boating, offshore fishing and surf casting.

Accreditation

Florida Council of Independent Schools
Southern Association of Colleges & Schools
Florida Kindergarten Council

Memberships

National Association of Independent Schools
Elementary School Heads Association



THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Head of School will report to the 24 Trustees, plus three ex officio members, of which one is the Senior Pastor, executing the mission of the school and carrying out policies developed in conjunction with the Board.

RPDS began as and remains a mission of Riverside Presbyterian Church. The Head must work in concert with the Senior Pastor and Board as joint stewards of that mission. The Board holds the mission of the school in trust and focuses on broad institutional policies, allowing the administration to operate the School. Authority is vested in the Board as a whole by the governing body of the church, and the most important task of the Board is its relationship with the Head.

While the school operates separately from the church and at arm's length from the church's governance, the school and the church share some facilities and space. Most importantly, both institutions share a sense of mission to the Jacksonville community and seek to be a resource to that community based on the spirit of the Reformed Faith. In addition to maintaining strong



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academics within a nurturing environment, the next head of RPDS must embrace and be energized by this faith and the relationship between the church and the school.

Leadership is focused on developing and effectively communicating a vision, and positioning an organization to be successful in implementing it. Servant Leadership is focused on approaching those leadership qualities with a willingness to serve those implementing the vision. The next Head of RPDS must truly love children and feel called to serve, finding teachable moments that connect faith and life and finding moments of grace alongside healthy, disciplined learning.

STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- Strong academics, curriculum
- Warm and welcoming atmosphere
- Spiritual foundation
- Dedicated, nurturing teachers
- Servant leadership and community involvement
- Well-balanced program with strong enrichment activities
- Individualized learning
- Parent involvement and participation encouraged
- Affiliation with Riverside Presbyterian Church
- Draws from many Jacksonville neighborhoods



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEW HEAD

- Manage the relationship between school and church
- Create additional opportunities for servant leadership
- Expand diversity in faculty and student body
- Expand/emphasize foreign language program
- Maintain the strong academic program
- Keep the mission strong, especially outreach in the community
- Develop a more inclusive program for all kinds of student learners
- Grow the endowment to create more financial aid opportunities
- Expand professional development opportunities for faculty
- Reach out to include alumni in the life of the school
- Improve safety and security in the urban neighborhood
- Develop a campus plan to address the challenges of a land-locked location.



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CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALIFICATIONS SOUGHT IN THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

- **Good communicator**
- **Loves children**
- **Servant leader/empowering leadership**
- **Strong in his or her Christian faith**

- Administrative experience
- Advanced degree
- Able to bridge the school and church
- Exposure to NAIS best educational practices
- Good recruiter
- High emotional intelligence
- Quick learner
- Strength with grace
- Visionary
- Relates well to all constituencies

Candidates interested in this opportunity are encouraged to submit, electronically, a cover letter expressing their reasons for their interest in Riverside Presbyterian Day School, a current resume, a statement of educational philosophy, and the names and contact numbers of four references to:

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