



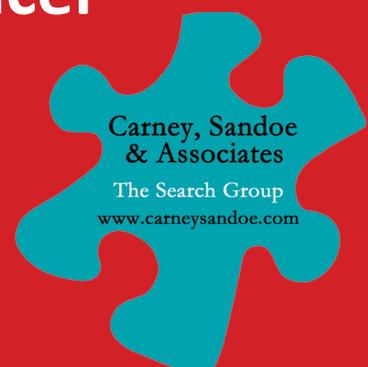
# St. Thomas High School

Houston, Texas

Principal / Chief Academic Officer

July 2017

[www.sths.org](http://www.sths.org)





## MISSION STATEMENT

Teaching goodness, discipline and knowledge is the tradition of the Basilian Fathers and the sacred mission of St. Thomas, a Catholic college preparatory high school.

## VISION STATEMENT

A man of St. Thomas is a faith-filled, life-long learner who thinks critically, communicates effectively, and prepares thoroughly to excel in college and in life. He actively serves his community, integrates Christian morality into all aspects of his life, and measures his success by the standards set forth in the Gospels.

## The Position

At the start of the 20th century, a new metropolis was emerging on the banks of the Buffalo Bayou in Eastern Texas. At the same time, the Basilian Fathers of Toronto, Canada founded a school at the new city's center, with the mission to provide every aspiring young man in Houston with an exceptional Catholic education.

Over the last 116 years, St. Thomas High School (STH) has built more than a community of high-achieving alumni; it's built a brotherhood. The strong sense of pride and belonging amongst STH students, faculty, families, and alumni is palpable to anyone who walks on campus. There is a school community with a rich legacy dating back generations and a long tradition of generosity and Christian service.

This distinguished all-boys independent Catholic secondary school now finds itself at a promising juncture. The President and Board of St. Thomas High School seek a new Principal to serve as chief academic officer of the school and to build on the school's many strengths while leading STH into an even brighter future. The ideal candidate will be a faith-filled, practicing Catholic and gifted entrepreneurial leader with exceptional communication skills and the experience needed to work collaboratively and effectively with the President in achieving the exciting goals of the institution.



## School History

Founded by the Basilian Fathers of Toronto in 1900, St. Thomas High School is the second-oldest continually operating private high school in Houston. Reverend Nicholas Roche, together with two fellow Basilian Fathers, began the all-boys Catholic school—then called St. Thomas College—in an unused portion of a Franciscan monastery in downtown Houston. Damage from a hurricane prompted a near-immediate relocation from this humble space to another downtown property, one that would eventually become known as the site of the old Kirby Theater on Capitol and Main Streets.

St. Thomas found stability soon thereafter. In 1903, Rev. Roche purchased and settled the school at a more permanent residence on Austin Street at Hadley. This campus served as home to STH for nearly four decades, during which time the school grew steadily in both size and reputation. Many practices and values developed in the school's early years have carried into the STH culture today. Perhaps most notable is their commitment to providing every interested and capable young man in Houston, regardless of means, with access to an exceptional private education.

As the city of Houston expanded in the twentieth century, so too did STH. In 1929, prior to the collapse of the U.S. economy and the onset of the Great Depression, then-principal Rev. T.P. O'Rourke had the foresight to seek out a new campus on what was then the western outskirts of the city. With great support from the local community, STH moved into its newly constructed school buildings on the corner of Memorial and Shepherd Drives in 1940 and has remained there ever since.

STH's self-contained campus now sits in the heart of Houston, just a couple of miles from downtown. Its proximity to all four quadrants of the city makes STH accessible to a diverse student population, drawing from over 120 zip codes.

## The School

From modest beginnings in what their website calls a “school-in-a-warehouse” to its current standing as a premier college-preparatory institution serving approximately 700 students each year, St. Thomas High School has upheld its Basilian mission to teach Goodness, Discipline, and Knowledge. This fundamental belief of the Basilian Fathers—that successful knowledge acquisition is possible only in the presence of spiritual goodness grounded in Christ’s message and an overarching sense of self-discipline—underpins all aspects of the STH student experience.

## Academics

St. Thomas High School has a longstanding reputation for academic excellence. The STH program creates service-oriented high achievers who go on to succeed in collegiate study and future careers. With 22 honors classes and 13 Advanced Placement courses in their catalog, the college preparatory aspect of the STH curriculum is a central component. Many science, math, and history courses use college-level textbooks. STH students consistently outperform national averages on AP exams and boast National Merit Scholars each year. Ninety-nine percent of STH graduates go on to four-year colleges and universities, and 100% pursue studies at a post-secondary educational institution.

This excellence is due in large part to a talented faculty, who year after year foster a warm and accepting learning environment where differences are embraced -- differences in culture, in religious belief, and in ways of learning. Their classical liberal arts curriculum, while challenging, is adapted to students’ individual learning styles. Even in times of peak enrollment, STH has kept the average



class size at 20 students, and the current faculty-to-student ratio is 13:1.

Religious education is, of course, another key part of the STH curriculum. While the school admits young men of all religious denominations, STH students are required to take four credits of Theology in order to graduate. They are also expected to attend yearly retreats and to worship in school-wide liturgies and celebrations.



## Athletics and Extra-Curriculars

St. Thomas High School ascribes to the famed excerpt from ancient Roman poetry, “a sound mind in a sound body.” The educational experience at STH thus prioritizes physical education and development equally alongside academics. Students of all experience levels and abilities are encouraged to engage in interscholastic sports, whether as a player, trainer, or team manager.

The STH Eagles are venerable competitors. The Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) has awarded STH their All-Sports Award for seven consecutive years. This year’s varsity baseball team became the first in STH history to be nationally ranked, rounding out an incredible season with a record of 30-2-1. The track and field team also made headlines recently, winning their tenth state championship in 2016. The school--which holds state titles in rugby, cross country, football, basketball, soccer, tennis, and golf as well--now boasts 100 state championships in total.

This accomplished athletics program includes freshmen, junior varsity, and varsity teams in every sport: football, baseball, basketball, track, soccer, tennis, cross country,

wrestling, swimming, rugby, lacrosse, and golf. Intramural programs offer ongoing opportunities for more casual competition as well. STH student athletes learn the value of healthy competition in conjunction with mutual respect, discipline, teamwork, and perseverance.

St. Thomas High School's extracurricular offerings are in no way limited to athletics. Ninety-five percent of students participate in at least one of over 40 clubs offered at STH. The school emphasizes diversity in its extracurricular activities—which range from Model UN, French and Latin Clubs, and Robotics Club to Pre Med, Drama, and Rocketry—as these experiences offer students alternative paths to self-discovery, cultural understanding, and spiritual growth.

## Service at STH

St. Thomas High School is a place where young boys grow into men of God through acts of service. Over the course of their four years at STH, every student participates in the school's Christian Service program. Freshmen must complete at least ten hours of service, while juniors and seniors must complete 40 hours each year. Also a part of the Campus Ministry, students attend mandatory off-campus retreats every year.

A related event that draws spirited participation and reflects the collective generosity of the STH community is the annual Round Up fundraiser. A moving symbol of the STH brotherhood, this fundraiser is led by current students, who raise funds that go exclusively toward tuition assistance for qualified students and applicants.



## COLLEGE PLACEMENTS

Below are just some of the colleges and universities that STH graduates have attended from 2011 to 2015.

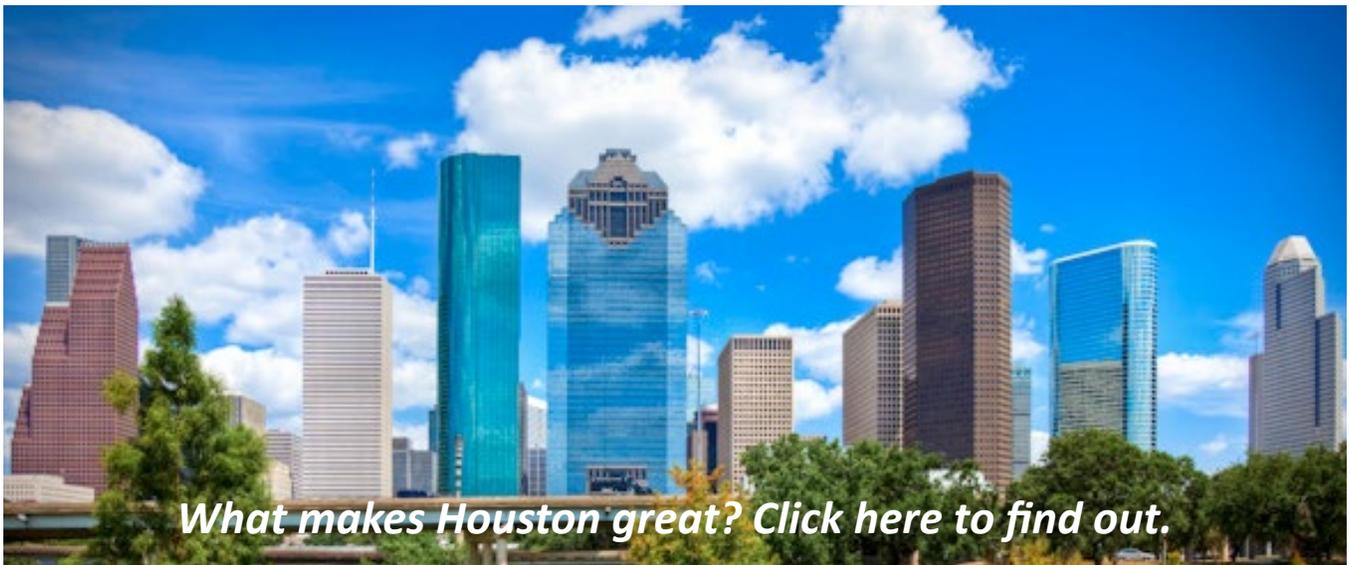
Allegheny College	Kenyon College	Tulane University
Auburn University	Loyola Marymount	Tufts University
Babson College	New York University	U.S. Air Force Academy
Baylor University	Pepperdine University	University of California, Berkeley
Belmont University	Princeton University	University of Chicago
Boston College	Purdue University	University of Colorado, Boulder
Bowdoin College	Rice University	University of Houston
Carnegie Mellon University	Rhodes College	University of Notre Dame
Clemson University	Saint Mary's College of CA	University of Pennsylvania
Cornell University	Sewanee-Univ. of the South	University of St. Thomas
Denison University	Spring Hill College	University of Southern California
DePaul University	Stanford University	University of Texas
Duke University	Southern Methodist University	University of Virginia
Eckerd College	Syracuse University	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Elon University	Swarthmore College	Vanderbilt University
Embry-Riddle Aero. Univ.	Texas A&M University	Villanova University
Grinnell College	The Ohio State University	Virginia Tech University
Johns Hopkins University	The University of Alabama	Washington & Lee University

### Physical Campus

Since its founding St. Thomas High School has resided at the heart of Houston, growing in parallel with the state's most populous city. This proximity to downtown and access to the city's public transit system is deliberate, reflecting the school's commitment to serving boys from all parts of Houston.

The current campus at the corner of Memorial and Shepherd Drives, which totals 16 acres, has evolved to meet the changing needs of students and faculty over nearly eight decades. The original Basilian Hall houses classrooms as well as the school's chapel, and the Schill Learning Center is the hub of the school's information resources. The Moran Fine Arts Center features Cemo Auditorium as well as the notable Hall of Honor. Athletics are centralized in the Webre Building, which houses the school's indoor gym, training rooms and locker rooms, while the adjacent Granger Stadium and Father Wilson Field offer exceptional facilities for the school's football and baseball programs.

Very recently, the school raised \$55 million in pledged donations to purchase an adjacent property of 11 acres, bringing the combined campus to a total of 27 acres. This will enable the school to expand its operations and enrollment.



*What makes Houston great? Click here to find out.*

## Houston, Texas

The fourth most populous city in the United States, Houston is remarkably diverse: in its people, its economy, and its culture. With a resilient job market, exceptionally low cost of living, and vibrant cultural scene, the Houston area has been named by Forbes, the New York Times, and others as an ideal place for career professionals and families to plant roots. It is also the most multicultural city in Texas—perhaps even in the U.S., as it has recently surpassed many of New York City’s most diverse demographics.

The city was founded on the banks of the Buffalo Bayou in 1836. Its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico made it a thriving port city from the outset, but the discovery of oil in 1901 served to hasten the rapid expansion of Houston and establish it as a hub for the energy industry—a fact still true today. Between 1900 and 1910 (also STH’s first decade educating young Houstonians), the city’s population doubled. By the middle of the 20th century, NASA’s Johnson Space Center and Mission Control had been built, and the world’s largest concentration of healthcare and research institutions, the Texas Medical Center, had been established. Since then, Houston has become a powerhouse for aeronautics, healthcare, and biomedical research in addition to natural energy. Today, Houston is second only to NYC in the number of Fortune 500 companies with headquarters in the city.

Houston’s downtown is exceptional for more than its skyline. Boasting the second-largest concentration of theaters in a downtown area in the US, Houston’s theater district occupies 17 blocks. Its six performance halls and nine performing arts organizations host the Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony Orchestra, Alley Theatre, and Theatre Under the Stars, among others.

Also noteworthy is the Museum District, which draws more than seven million visitors

per year to its mile-and-a-half section of downtown. Attractions include the Space Center Houston (NASA’s official visitor center), Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of Natural Science, Contemporary Art Museum, Menil Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Holocaust Museum Houston. The Rothko Chapel, Houston Zoo, Downtown Aquarium, and Sam Houston Race Park offer additional things to explore, while the city’s expansive green spaces and commuter bike paths provide ample opportunity to take in the warm weather year-round.

Houston is the only major U.S. city that boasts four major league sports teams—the Houston Texans of the NFL, the NBA’s Houston Rockets, the MLB’s Houston Astros, and the MLS Dynamo—all situated downtown or only a few miles away.



The combination of a thriving economy and increasingly multicultural community has led to the emergence of an exceptional culinary scene in Houston. From the predictable barbeque and Tex Mex to spectacular seafood and ethnic eats, Houston’s reputation amongst foodies is growing. In sum, the city of Houston is unique not only to Texas but to the country as a whole, and offers many perks to the five million people who now call it home.



# Opportunities and Challenges

Houston is a highly competitive educational community with several outstanding Catholic, independent, and public/charter schools. St. Thomas is also transitioning from religious to lay leadership in the Principal role, raising questions among some in the community about the future direction of the school and its fidelity to Catholic identity and values. While there is no real cause for concern, the next Principal of St. Thomas High School will need to be a faith-filled, practicing Catholic—of exceptional character and integrity—who will exemplify and embrace the core values of the Basilian Fathers while positioning the school for further success.

Some specific opportunities and challenges include the following:

- Key new hires at the school include the Director of Admissions, an interim Assistant Principal, and the Director of College Counseling. The Principal will be expected to build a solid and cohesive team and to serve as an inspiration and source of guidance to these new members of the leadership group.
- STH is a high performing academic institution with an outstanding faculty. Nevertheless, faculty members seem eager to take student achievement to the next level and to continue incorporating research-based best practices into the classroom. The next Principal will have an opportunity to lead a highly motivated faculty poised for further improvement.
- Due to the increasingly competitive environment, STH enrollment has declined in recent years. The Principal will be expected to work closely with the President in raising the profile and powerful Basilian value proposition of the school to restore enrollments to their prior historic levels. The Principal will need to bring vision and energy, and find new ways to create demand for the extraordinary STH experience.
- The Board has made a major financial commitment in purchasing an adjacent property for the purpose of increasing the capacity and resources of the school. A master plan is in place, which the Principal will be expected to implement.



# Qualities and Qualifications of the next Principal

St. Thomas High School operates within the President/Principal leadership structure. In this powerful model the President serves as the chief executive officer, responsible for all aspects of the institution. The Principal reports to the President and serves as the chief academic officer, responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school and the overall quality of the student experience including faith formation and mission integration, academic achievement, effective family engagement, and co-curricular activities. The President and Principal must function effectively as a unified team and achieve leadership synergies through a seamless and purposeful implementation of duties. Strength, confidence, and deep domain knowledge of secondary education, combined with humility and a commitment to teamwork, are the professional qualities most desired in the Principal.

In addition, the next Principal of St. Thomas High School will ideally possess the following qualities and qualifications:

- A faith-filled, practicing Catholic who exemplifies the core values and traditions of the Basilian Fathers. A passion for Catholic identity and mission are fundamental requirements of the Principal.
- The St. Thomas community prides itself on its spirit of equity and inclusion, and expects that the next Principal will continue to welcome students and families of all faith traditions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- The next Principal will be an inherently and genuinely “relational” leader who engages joyfully with the community and who is a high-profile presence on campus and in the Greater Houston area.
- A humble, servant leader who will partner with the President in achieving the important goals and priorities of the school while maintaining accountability and high expectations of all faculty and staff.
- Given the size and complexity of the school, the Principal should also be an effective and responsible operations manager with knowledge of budgeting and prudent financial practices who can work closely with the business office and serve as an effective steward of the school’s limited resources.
- And finally, the next Principal should be an institution builder who can use his/her leadership platform to help grow enrollments, build enduring brand, and work closely with the President to communicate the compelling St. Thomas High School story.

This is an exceptional opportunity for a leader with passion and integrity who is eager to make a difference for students, families, and the Greater Houston community.

## How to Apply

Candidates should submit the following materials via email:

- Cover letter aligning your skills, experiences, and values with the leadership needs of the school.
- Current resume with all appropriate dates.
- Statement of educational or leadership philosophy.
- List of five (5) references with all contact information.

There is no deadline for applying, but to ensure appropriate consideration candidates are advised to submit their materials as soon as possible.

### **BOB REGAN**

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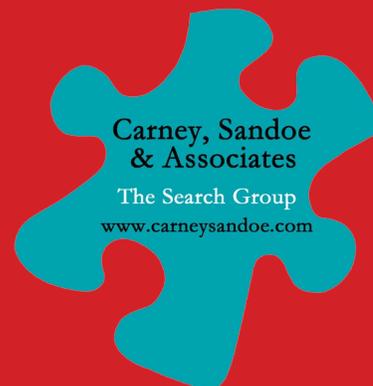
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## Your CS&A Search Consultant



**Bob Regan**





Thank you for your interest  
in St Thomas High School!

