



# Founding Head of School

## *Position Description*

### THE OPPORTUNITY

The **San Francisco Girls' School** (SFGS) will be a groundbreaking secondary school entrant into a globally important market with a growing population, high demand for independent secondary schools, and unusually limited supply. SFGS will be nationally recognized for its academic excellence and outstanding STEM program, and well known for its mission: to educate and inspire girls to become innovators and leaders in STEM, entrepreneurship and finance.

The School's opening is planned for August 2021, and at peak capacity will enroll 300 students in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. SFGS intends to measure its success based on increasing the number of its students - from all walks of life - who pursue STEM subjects in college, and later, STEM careers. The School's goal is to strengthen, through research-driven pedagogy and programming, the pipeline of women pursuing leadership positions in STEM fields—an industry imperative.

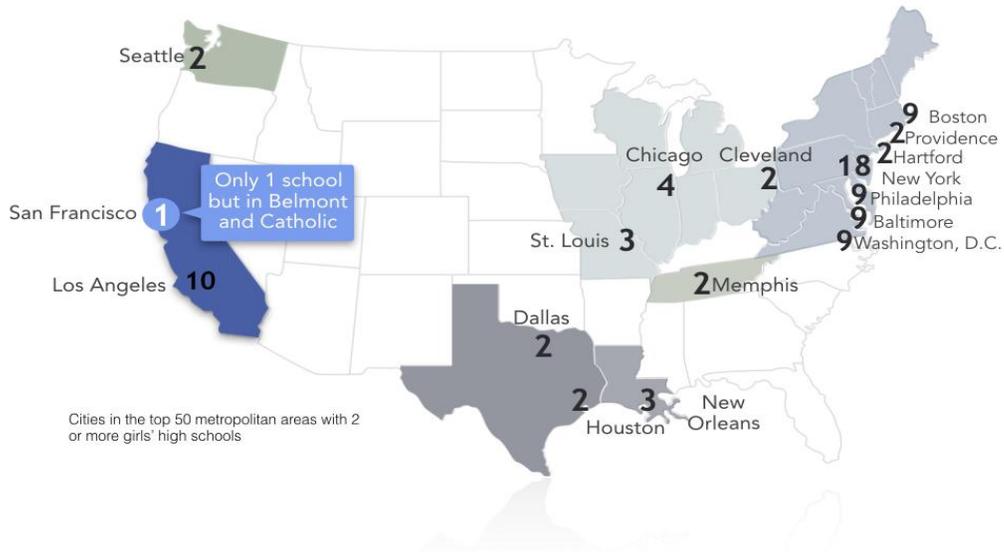
The vision calls for SFGS to be an incubator for developing innovative STEM coursework, in collaboration with industry leaders, through its **Center of Excellence for Girls' STEM Education**. The Center, an integral part of the school's day-to-day operations, will deliver its STEM curriculum online for free to a broad community of students through the establishment of a public girls' school consortium. Ongoing discussions with an initial fourteen public girls' schools has generated keen interest in consortium participation. The Center will integrate data analysis from this pioneering public-private initiative with original research to refine best practices and develop a foundational pedagogy in teaching girls STEM.

Beginning in July 2019, the Founding Head of School will work closely with the founders to launch SFGS and to lead the School's fundraising, curriculum development and team building efforts. The Founding Head will provide the vision, leadership, strategy and management skills necessary to lead a start-up organization to success.

### The Case for an Independent Girls' School to Serve the San Francisco Bay Area

The San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward MSA (Bay Area), with a population of over 4.7 million in 2017, has only one independent, all-girls high school and lacks a non-sectarian option. As displayed on the next page, this is an anomaly among major urban areas across the U.S. where all-girl schools are a historic and cultural norm.

Lack of All-Girl Independent High School in San Francisco



Significant Need for Additional Independent Secondary School Options

There is strong demand for independent secondary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area which is not being met by existing institutions, as highlighted in the chart below. Castilleja, an independent all-girls 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade school located south of the MSA, in Palo Alto, also has robust demand, accepting fewer than 10% of high school applicants.

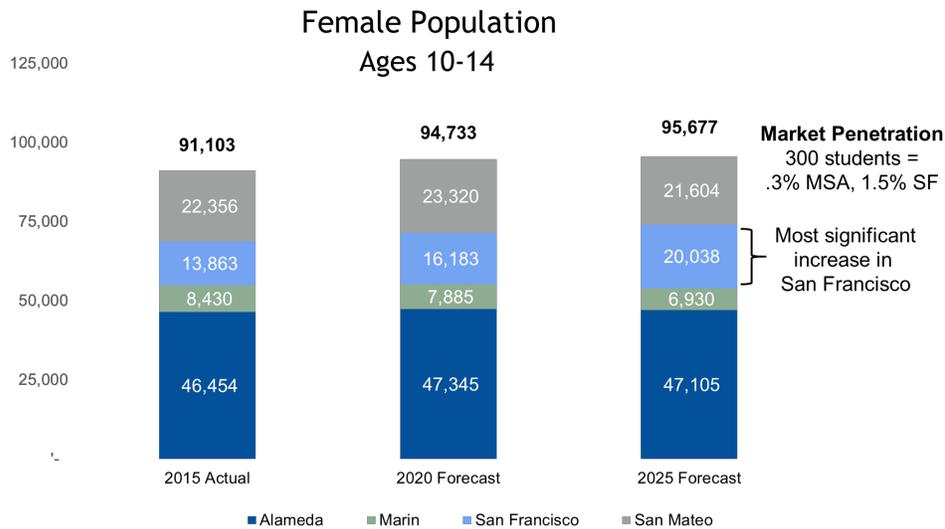
**Demand significantly greater than availability  
2018-2019**

School	Enrollment/Applications
Lick	14%
Urban	15%
Bay	16%
University	17%
Branson	21%
Marin Academy	25%

Success Achievable with Minimal Market Penetration

SFGS’s target population of 10-14 year-old girls residing in four of the San Francisco MSA counties is expected to grow over the next decade, particularly dramatically in San Francisco County. To reach its target enrollment, SFGS only needs to admit .3% of the target MSA market or 1.5% of

the relevant population in San Francisco county where the School will be based.



California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit

## The Case for a STEM Focused School in the Bay Area, Hub of the Global Tech Industry and Academic Research

In 1980, 37% of all computer science degrees were granted to women; by 2013, that number had fallen to 18%. The declining percentage of female graduates with computer science degrees combined with disproportionately high technology workforce attrition (56% attrition in technology vs. 20% in non-STEM fields) has significantly reduced the percentage of women working in the industry. In 1991, female employment in technology peaked at 36%, declining today to an average of 25% nationwide, with only 21% in San Francisco-based companies; a lower percentage in technical roles. Female representation at technology companies is expected to decline further unless the decreasing number of women graduating with technical degrees can be reversed and high female workforce attrition can be stemmed. This has become a critical issue in the technology industry, galvanizing widespread efforts to find solutions.

The San Francisco Bay area is perfectly positioned to be a key player in finding solutions to this industry challenge. The region is home to five of the world's top ten largest technology companies, as ranked by the most recent Forbes Global 2000 list. In addition to being a high technology center, the Bay Area is one of the world's most important hubs for biotechnology and medical device companies, where women are significantly underrepresented in management roles. All of these companies are poised to be both partners and resources as they strive for greater diversity at all levels of their workforce.

The area's research institutions, renowned for excellence in STEM innovation, including University of California, San Francisco, Stanford University and the University of California,

Berkeley, present unique opportunities for partnerships and internships as well.

The SFGS founders therefore believe there will be high demand for SFGS graduates, while Bay Area technology-based companies will be a committed source of School financial and intellectual capital.

### **VISION FOR SFGS AND CENTER OF EXCELLENCE**

The SFGS founders are impassioned advocates of the research that shows the advantages of all-girls education, and have a profound desire for young women in the San Francisco Bay Area to benefit from such an education.

The founders of SFGS share a vision for the School which includes:

- Dedication to academic excellence and rigor in core critical thinking subjects.
- Focus on a leading-edge, innovative STEM program designed to optimize girls' learning.
- Commitment to interdisciplinary, project-based and experiential learning where failure and an iterative approach are embraced.
- Fostering creativity through a strong arts and design program.
- Development of students who are confident, resilient leaders, risk-takers, and excellent collaborators.
- Commitment to developing independent thinkers, analytical problem solvers and strong communicators.
- Dedication to social-emotional learning and developing responsible, compassionate and globally-aware citizens.
- Commitment to cultural and economic diversity with 20% of gross revenue dedicated to financial aid.
- Maximum 1:8 teacher to student ratio.

It is envisioned that the school will have an innovation lab, corporate and university internships, entrepreneurship and STEM competitions, a finance program with multiple courses, a speaker series and endowed teaching chairs.

The vision for the Center of Excellence includes:

- Commitment to research of the highest integrity and broadest value.
- Rigorous, long-term collection and analysis of data to inform the refinement of best practices.
- Cultivation of partnerships and collaborations that enhance the learning and performance of consortium students.
- Prioritization of the most effective best practices with a view to developing a universal pedagogy for teaching girls STEM.

SFGS has 501(c)(3) status. The School is a member of the National Coalition of Girls' Schools and plans to become a member of the National Association of Independent Schools. SFGS will seek

accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges at the earliest feasible date.

## **GOVERNANCE**

The Founding Head of School will report to the Board of Trustees. The Head will be responsible for all faculty and administrative staff and management of the senior leadership team.

## **ROLE DESCRIPTION**

There is wide scope for the Founding Head of School to determine strategy, programming, the school's culture and team, since the founders themselves are not educators (although working with respected consultants and advisors). The Head will be responsible for ensuring the successful funding, launch, growth and sustainability of SFGS. She/he will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the start-up organization as well as establishing and implementing SFGS's long-term vision and mission.

Specifically, the role will involve the following responsibilities:

### Start-up Leadership

During the first two years of the Head's tenure, the successful candidate will be focused on:

- Promoting the School and benefits of all-girls education to Bay Area parents and students; overseeing the development of a marketing and communications strategy.
- Engaging with individuals, corporations and foundations alongside the founders to raise the capital to ensure SFGS's launch and success.
- Developing the School's curriculum, special programs and Center of Excellence.
- Helping to identify the Phase 1 facility in consultation with a retained real estate broker, and overseeing any building upgrades.
- Hiring the initial faculty and administrative staff.
- Managing the Board of Trustees, advisors and partners; establishing board governance policies and procedures.

Longer-term, the role will involve:

### Educational & Organizational Leadership

- Establishing SFGS's reputation for academic excellence and innovation, at the forefront

of girls' STEM education.

- Creating an institutional culture that develops fearless female leaders able to participate in male-dominated fields and meet the challenges of a globally interconnected and increasingly complex world.
- Developing a collaborative and inspiring learning environment for young women that is supported by exceptional teaching.
- Overseeing the development of a Center of Excellence which will establish nationally recognized best practices and pedagogy for teaching high school girls STEM, based on the science of learning and the integration of new research and data analytics.
- Attracting and retaining a diverse population of high achieving girls, regardless of financial circumstances and cultural background.

#### Team & Resource Management

- Recruiting, developing and retaining extraordinary teachers.
- Cultivating a goals-oriented, collegial, and data-based high-performance culture that reflects SFGS's values.
- Overseeing responsible financial and resource management.
- Participating in Phase II site identification; overseeing space planning to determine required building improvements for optimal learning and safety.
- Engaging and leveraging the Board of Trustees and Advisory Boards to ensure the school's success.

#### External Engagement

- Assuming a leadership role in fundraising with support from the Board of Trustees.
- Building relationships with local and national STEM companies, universities, and non-profits to develop partnerships for the School, the Center of Excellence, the consortium and students.
- Cultivating a diverse and inclusive student body and staff through broad outreach.
- Establishing strong relationships with the parent and neighborhood communities.

## CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

### Educational & Organizational Leadership

- Visionary educator, administrator or executive with a track record of successful leadership, fundraising and organization-building skills.
- Dynamic speaker with strong interpersonal and communications skills.
- Passionate believer in, and advocate for, girls' education with an ability to articulate persuasively its advantages.
- Entrepreneurial risk-taker able to meet the day-to-day demands and opportunities of a start-up.
- Experience developing an innovative and successful curriculum; an understanding of existing research and best practices for teaching girls, and what constitutes standards of excellence in programming for girls, all a plus.
- Experience utilizing milestones, data analysis and metrics to achieve defined outcomes.
- A track record of building a diverse and inclusive organization.
- College or advanced degree in a STEM subject a bonus.

### Team & Resource Management

- Proven ability to establish a highperforming, collaborative team by nurturing and retaining talented staff.
- Experience working successfully with a board of trustees or directors ideal.
- Exposure to financial management, cross-departmental budget planning, as well as scenario modelling and forecasting.
- Experience establishing compensation policies including benefits and merit-based bonus policies a plus.

### External Engagement

- Track record of successful donor cultivation; experience with alumni and parent engagement a bonus.

- Proven ability to enlist partner organizations and to form a strong professional network of innovators and leaders in education or business; a plus in STEM fields.

### **APPOINTMENT PROCESS & TIMING**

The Head will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Applications should include a resume and letter of interest addressing the candidate's qualifications to serve as SFGS's Founding Head of School. Please provide the requested material in a single PDF document and send applications to Genevieve Anderson ([anderson@sfgirls.org](mailto:anderson@sfgirls.org)).

The successful candidate will ideally begin July 1, 2019, although there is room for negotiation on this start date.