

Head of School, Diablo Valley Montessori School (DVMS) Start Date: Summer 2021

About DVMS



Located in Lafayette, California, in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, DVMS was founded as a non-profit in 1965 by parents wanting a Montessori education for their children. Serving approximately 150 children, ages 3 months – 6 years across eleven classrooms, the school is supported by more than 40 dedicated staff members. A budget of over \$2 million provides for the successful operation of a comprehensive, early childhood Montessori education following the

standards set forth by the American Montessori Society (AMS).

The culture at DVMS is built around the collaborative partnership between and among administration, teachers, and parents in support of the development and well-being of the child. An Infant/Toddler Coordinator and Early Childhood Coordinator support classroom teachers and families, as well as nurturing the school/home relationship. A deep belief in the school's mission and the value of Montessori education is manifested in the long tenures of staff and families. The pride and commitment found in the greater DVMS community are illustrated by the many generations of children that have attended the school.

Nestled among mature trees on several acres of land, the DVMS campus is comprised of four charming houses that accommodate the school's Infant/Toddler and Preschool Programs. The school's well-tended outdoor space benefits from northern California sunshine, warm temperatures, and wonderful views of the surrounding hills. DVMS owns the property and buildings outright. The school's Montessori program is enhanced by its Outdoor Classroom, two bilingual Spanish/English EC classrooms, kindergarten enrichment program as well as unique extracurricular offerings. The Infant/Toddler programs are year-round, while the Early Childhood programs follow an academic year. Summer camp and extended care programs are also offered.

DVMS's Mission

DVMS is a partnership of its teaching staff, parents, and administration:

- Providing the highest quality Montessori education for all children enrolled;

- Supporting the development of a professional, skilled, and nurturing staff;
- Encouraging the involvement and participation of its families.

For more information about DVMS please visit the school's [website](#).

Head of School Profile

Montessori Leader * Tactical & Strategic Thinker * Community Builder * Communicator

The next Head of School (HOS) at DVMS will be joining an established, successful school with a stable organizational environment and **strong culture of collaboration and participation**. They must be skilled at building trust and relationships in order to cultivate a strong and respected voice in decision making processes. This individual must be committed to first observing and gaining credibility in order to effectively apply their experience, expertise, and people skills to guide needed improvements and create a vision for the school's future. Commitment to continuous improvement is key, building on the accomplishments of the school to date, the dedication of the veteran faculty, and the passionate engagement of long-time families. Skillful talent development and the ability to delegate wisely will serve the new HOS well.

The ideal candidate is an experienced Montessorian who is also well-versed in the business aspects of running a school. The ability to balance the implementation of a high-quality Montessori education with savvy business decisions is essential. Fundraising will play a large part in the school's ability to achieve strategic and tactical goals; the new HOS will need to be a driving force behind fundraising efforts. DVMS's new HOS must be a strategic thinker who can develop a clear vision for the school, articulate the steps to get there and effectively engage the community to join in that vision. Tactically, they will need to observe current structures and systems in order to design solutions to improve and bolster operational efficiency and sustainability. Fresh perspectives and motivating improvements will be appreciated. Most importantly, **the new HOS must continue the legacy of deep love of children and demonstrate passion and leadership for early childhood and Montessori education.**

Personality traits that will serve the new HOS well include approachable, warm, compassionate, tenacious, open-minded, flexible, energetic, inspiring, organized and fair.

The profile below indicates traits, skills, roles, and responsibilities that would align with success for the next HOS at DVMS.

A Montessori Leader, dedicated to

- Demonstrating passion, leadership and expertise in early childhood and Montessori education

- Working collaboratively, as a colleague, partner and mentor to Montessori teachers and staff across all programs
- Developing the talent, knowledge, and abilities of everyone in the community, through a commitment to high-quality professional development, parent education, and recruitment and retention of excellent employees
- Modeling Montessori philosophy and values through words, actions, and behavior
- Ensuring that DVMS maintains its reputation for high quality early childhood Montessori education in the greater Lafayette community

Tactical and Strategic Thinker, skilled at

- Developing, in partnership with the Board, strategic planning with a focus on capital improvements, enrollment management, fundraising, technology advancements and administrative functions
- Guiding many different stakeholders with conflicting priorities towards the same goal, aligning various perspectives, and leading the group to consensus, all while understanding the financial implications of decisions
- Managing personnel, hiring, evaluations, and staffing in order to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff
- Possessing the business acumen to understand, lead, execute and hold accountable all aspects of the school operation and management
- Embracing the scope of work of a not-for-profit, parent-governed school

Community Builder, gifted at

- Creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where children and adults feel encouraged and welcomed to engage, participate, contribute, and express their voices
- Building rapport, managing stakeholders' relationships and expectations, and staying true to the mission and vision of DVMS
- Being a "people person" - parents and employees expect an open-door policy, a welcoming smile and great listening skills from the new HOS
- Respecting, representing and embracing all stakeholders, while fostering a culture of diversity and inclusivity
- Engaging, encouraging, supporting, and educating parents as partners so they feel integrated into the school community and can better support their children at home

A Compassionate Communicator, skilled at

- Negotiating difficult discussions in a compassionate way
- Messaging with calmness and transparency to inspire a sense of security in the school's present and future
- Ensuring relevant communications happen in a timely and effective manner, both internally with the staff and externally with parents and the broader school community

- Clearly articulating the mission and vision of DVMS, differentiating it from local area Montessori programs, as well as the highly regarded public school system
- Interacting with a high degree of emotional intelligence, diplomacy and tact, while respecting and strengthening relationships among administration, staff, teachers, and parents

Opportunity

The next HOS of DVMS will be leading a school that is deeply rooted in Montessori and early childhood education and firmly grounded by its long history, success, well-established culture and parent engagement. This is an amazing opportunity for a compassionate, tenacious school leader who can honor the school's legacy, serve as a collaborative role model and guide this school into the future. DVMS's excellent reputation in the community and strong demand from the surrounding area for high-quality Montessori and early childhood education offer the prospect for exciting possibilities for a new HOS.

The extremely dedicated and veteran administration and faculty are looking for a leader to join them, meet them where they are, support them, and inspire them. There is also a strong desire from the parent community to participate and further engage with the school – the new HOS should welcome this and know how to capitalize on it for the benefit of all.

The HOS is responsible for the execution of the mission, vision and strategic goals of DVMS to produce the highest level of education consistent with the educational standards set forth by the AMS. The new HOS must possess both Montessori and early childhood expertise, as well as the business acumen to understand, lead, and execute all aspects of the school operation and management.

The HOS is under the direct supervision of the DVMS Board, which is responsible for the HOS's hiring and annual evaluation. The HOS works closely with the Board, which has oversight responsibility for the school.

DVMS is looking for an excellent new leader to be in place for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Please see next page for **Position Requirements** and **Application Process**.

Position Requirements

- Montessori credential from a MACTE accredited teacher education program
- Administrative experience in an educational setting; three years' experience and administration in a Montessori school preferred
- Montessori/Early Childhood teaching experience required; three year minimum preferred
- A Bachelor's degree; advanced degrees in a related field preferred
- Experience with regulatory, personnel, budget, and fiscal management preferred
- Experience working with families and leaders from diverse community areas

Interested candidates will submit the following documents, **by September 1, 2020** via email to [Lisa Sarafidis](#), Managing Director, [Metro Consulting Services](#).

1. Cover letter addressed to the Search Committee expressing interest in and detailing qualifications for the position
2. A current resume
3. A statement of educational leadership philosophy (1-2 pages)
4. Two examples of writing on a school or educational topic (can be school newsletter/communications)
5. Five references (including email addresses and telephone numbers) that can be contacted confidentially
6. Other documents/media may be required later in the process

Candidates' engagement with the search will be kept confidential until the final stage of the process. Candidates are free to communicate directly with Lisa Sarafidis via [email](#) or phone (301) 230-0901 regarding the search process.