

## Director, St. Mark's Montessori School

### About St. Mark's Montessori School



Located in Springfield, Virginia, a close-in suburb of Washington, DC, St. Mark's Montessori School (SMMS) was established as a secular program in September 1968 by St. Mark's Lutheran Church (SMLC). SMMS is dedicated to providing a high quality, authentic Montessori curriculum. It adheres to AMI Montessori principles in philosophy and implementation. As one of the oldest Montessori schools in the region, SMMS is rich in history, tradition, and ritual. The school's events are woven into the social fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The richly diverse school community is a point of pride at SMMS. Staff and families represent many nationalities, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds.

SMMS is a loving community of engaged children, talented Montessori teachers, and supportive parents that believe deeply in Montessori education and the SMMS mission. It has a deep, supportive alumni network and benefits from a close relationship with the SMLC and wider community. Low levels of staff turnover and high rates of family retention – with several generations of students having attended the program – illustrate the pride and commitment found in the greater SMMS community.

The school has three primary classrooms serving children ages 3-6 years old. SMMS offers before and after care as well as an optional summer camp program. Housed on the spacious SMLC campus, the school's facilities include 3 light-filled classrooms with well-cared for materials, a large multipurpose room for activities and school events, dedicated nap rooms and extended care rooms, and an expansive new natural playground with lovely garden beds. The school benefits from both beautiful natural surroundings and easy access to cosmopolitan enrichment opportunities in the surrounding community.

### SMMS's Mission

The school's mission is to offer students the opportunity to develop independence, leadership qualities, and self-discipline, while building a solid foundation for all future learning. For more information about SMMS please visit the school's website.

## Director Profile

The next Director at SMMS be will be a compassionate, pragmatic, and flexible Montessorian. A strong teaching background will enable them to support children, staff, and parents in the authentic implementation of Montessori methodology. Stylistically, they must interact with a high degree of emotional intelligence, diplomacy, and tact. They should be open-minded, approachable, warm, honest, and fair. Most importantly, the new Director must genuinely enjoy people and know how to create a community where all children, parents, and staff feel safe, welcomed, accepted, and loved.

The ideal candidate has experience both leading and managing, relying on well-developed creative, strategic and tactical problem-solving skills. They will be a collaborative leader who understands how to build trust, delegate wisely, and inspire others to action. The ability to balance the execution of a high-quality Montessori program with savvy business, financial and operational decisions is essential.

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

### ***Montessori Champion • Collaborative Leader • Community Builder • Strategic Thinker***

#### **A Montessori Champion, dedicated to**

- Maintaining high levels of academic excellence through authentic implementation of the Montessori methodology, while keeping abreast of wider educational school trends and best practices.
- Modeling Montessori philosophy through words, actions, and behavior, fostering a spirit of respect, independence, compassion, and flexibility in relationships and community.
- Leading by example, committed to the principles of Grace and Courtesy, active listening and observing, and life-long learning.
- Serving as a mentor and guide to both newly trained and experienced Montessori teachers.

#### **A Collaborative Leader, adept at**

- Creating a vision for the future, through building on the school's strengths, addressing its challenges, identifying growth opportunities, and capitalizing on those opportunities.
- 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.

- Actively seeking input from all members of the community while knowing when to take a stand, keeping the best interests of the children in mind.
- Building trust and a sense of belonging with staff and families, so the community functions effectively and lovingly, conflicts are resolved in a fair and compassionate manner, and everyone feels heard, respected, empowered and valued.

#### **A Community Builder, gifted at**

- Creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where children and adults feel encouraged and welcome to engage, participate, contribute, and express themselves.
- Communicating with a high degree of emotional intelligence, diplomacy, and tact, while strengthening relationships between administration, staff, teachers, and parents.
- Messaging with calmness and transparency; ensuring relevant communications happen in a timely and effective manner, so all members of the community feel secure in the school's present and future.
- Engaging, encouraging, supporting, and educating parents so they feel integrated into the school community, and can better support their children at home.

#### **A Strategic and Tactical Thinker, skilled at**

- Guiding many different stakeholders with conflicting priorities towards the same goal, aligning the various perspectives, and leading the group to consensus, all while understanding the financial implications of decisions.
- Engaging with internal and external communities in order to enhance the school's reputation, maximize enrollment, expand programs, and solidify the school's future.
- Sustaining and elevating fiscal, facility and operational management, complying with all health, safety and educational standards and regulations.
- Managing personnel, hiring, evaluations, and staffing in order to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff, within correct county, state, and federal guidelines.

### **Opportunity**

The next Director of SMMS will be leading a school that is deeply committed to Montessori pedagogy and firmly grounded by its long history and well-developed rituals, traditions, and culture. This is an amazing opportunity for a leader who can take this beautiful foundation and lead it into the future. The school's excellent reputation in the community and strong demand from the surrounding area for affordable, high-quality early childhood education, offer the prospect for eventual programmatic expansion possibilities.

The next Director will work collaboratively with all stakeholders to solidify and define the school's identity and mission for the future. The extremely dedicated, highly talented staff –



skilled at making decisions as a team – is looking for a leader to join them, guide them, support them, and inspire them. There is also a strong desire from the parent community to participate, contribute, and collaborate – the new Director should welcome this, and know how to capitalize on it for the benefit of all. SMMS strongly supports the school/home partnership and encourages parental interest and participation in the program.

The Director is responsible for developing and implementing the mission, vision and goals of SMMS to produce the highest level of education consistent with the educational principles set forth by Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). The Director is under the direct supervision of the SMLC Montessori Advisory Board, which is responsible for the Director's hiring and annual evaluation. The Director works closely with the Board, which has oversight responsibility for the school.

SMMS is looking for an excellent new leader to be in place for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

### **Position Requirements**

- MACTE- accredited Montessori credential, with strong preference for AMI diploma
- Experience in a position of leadership in an educational setting
- Montessori teaching experience required; 5 year minimum preferred
- B.A. at a minimum with preference for advanced degrees in a related field
- Experience with regulatory, personnel, budgeting, and fiscal management preferred