

## **Principal/Founding Group, School Leader, and School Leadership Team [14 Del. C. § 512(1)]**

### **1. If the Principal/School Leader candidate has been identified:**

A candidate has not yet been identified. It is expected that upon approval of the charter application, Montessori Works will identify a leader for the school effective January 2018.

### **2. If the candidate is not yet identified, summarize the Board and/or other Founding Group...**

Montessori Works will continue to seek funding to engage J. Brett Taylor, Ed.D. as a consultant to manage the project in the months following the approval of the charter and leading to the establishment of the operating board. The Montessori Works Board of Directors is comprised of educational and business professionals dedicated to creating an innovative, successful and sustainable Montessori school. In the absence of a full-time school leader, Dr. Taylor will serve as a project manager. Dr. Taylor's role and those of the Montessori Works Board members are outlined below:

#### **Project Manager:**

**J. Brett Taylor, Ed.D.** – Dr. Taylor brings knowledge of charter school development and has past experience working in public school finance in Delaware school Districts. Dr. Taylor is responsible for the overall development of the application and will manage the project including the educational program, financial projections and budget, feasibility study and structure of the school. Upon approval, Dr. Taylor will continue to be engaged as a project manager to support the opening of the school. He will be responsible for coordinating the work of the board around the specific areas outlined below.

#### **Governance, Financials, Operating Board:**

**Jesse Reeves, President, Montessori Works** – Coordination of governance issues, such as formulation of the Operating Board, fundraising, consultant arrangements, and non-profit governance and management. Mr. Reeves has been a small business owner, served on the boards of non-profit organizations (see resume), and brings expertise in business management and human resources.

**Ray Armstrong, Montessori Works Board** – Provides guidance on legal issues, bylaw development and formation of the Operations Board. Mr. Armstrong is an attorney with the firm of Giordano, DelCollo & Werb. He also serves as a member of the advisory board of First State Montessori Academy.

**Mark Conces, Montessori Works Board** – Provides guidance on financial management, support for fundraising. Mark is a senior vice president at Citizens Bank and former treasurer of the board of Wilmington Montessori School, which his children attended.

#### **Educational Program:**

**E. McCrae Harrison, Board Member** – Responsible for reviewing all information pertaining to the State standards, curriculum and educational programming for the SMS. Ms. Harrison was

the former Head of the Elementary Workshop Montessori School, provided advisement to FSMA on their charter application, and is currently a teacher leader in the Montessori Academy at Christina. As a Delaware certified and Montessori credentialed teacher in the public schools, Ms. Harrison brings a wealth of knowledge of Montessori practice, Common Core Standards, and assessment. Ms. Harrison maintains strong relationships with Montessori teachers in Delaware who will support this work.

**Scott Richardson, PhD, Board Member** – Responsible for reviewing program decisions pertaining to special education, ELL, and gifted students. Dr. Richardson is a past Board member of the New School of Lancaster which is an independent Montessori School. Dr. Richardson's work experience in is school curriculum development, particularly special education.

**Lori Smith, Ed.D. , Board Member** - Coordination of all academic information, school structure, teacher and administrative evaluation, assessment data. Dr. Smith brings experience as a Montessori trained teacher and current public school teacher in Delaware. In addition, she has completed doctoral work in school leadership. Dr. Smith is uniquely positioned to understand the Montessori curriculum, state standards, Common Core Standards, assessment issues, and the needs to serve a diverse school community.

**Trish Hermance, Board Member** - Coordination of all academic information, school structure, teacher and administrative evaluation, and assessment data. Ms. Hermance's background as a leader of a successful Delaware Charter School provides a strong foundation for this work. In addition, her current role at the University of Delaware places her in a position to stay abreast of educational change in Delaware and to maintain important relationships to support this work.

**Teacher and Leadership Recruitment:**

**Linda Zankowsky, Vice President, Montessori Works** – Coordination of school leader recruitment, Educational Director, teacher recruitment, Montessori teacher training for future SMS teachers, and liaison with other Montessori organizations. Dr. Zankowsky provided advisement to FSMA on the development of their charter application, led Wilmington Montessori School for 12 years and served a principal in two Delaware Public Schools prior to her current position at the University of Delaware. As shared in her resume, she brings a strong background in school leadership as well as curriculum and instruction. She is currently working with the NCMPS to develop a strong model for training public Montessori teachers in Delaware.

**Christine Carrino Gorowara, Board Member** - Will provide advisement to the development of the Montessori Teacher Training program. Dr. Gorowara's experience as a leader nationally in teacher preparation through her work with CAEP and currently at the University of Delaware will guide Montessori Works in developing a local Montessori Training program to support the expanding need for Montessori teachers for SMS as well as other public Montessori programs.

**Community Engagement and Parent Information/Marketing, Facility Location, Operating Board:**

**Alonna Berry, Consultant, Teach for America** – Coordination of all community engagement, parent information and marketing in Sussex County in support of the school. Ms. Berry is a long-time community member in Sussex County. She is intimately familiar with Sussex County, particularly western Sussex County. Her deep relationships in schools and the community at large will contribute to the successful marketing of the SMS.

**Sean Steward, Board member, Montessori Works** – Coordination of all engagement with business leaders on fundraising activities; civic partners and real estate advisors to determine the location of the school; and candidates for the Operating Board of Directors. Mr. Steward, a Leadership Delaware alum, has strong ties across Sussex County. His work as a small business owner and real estate agent position him ideally to continue to build relationships with key community leaders, raise funds for the school, and identify a location for SMS.

**Carol Holzman** - Ms. Holzman provides support with community engagement and fund raising in Sussex County. A Sussex County resident and former Montessori parent, Ms. Holzman is well positioned to help parents understand the value of a Montessori education, to link the School with community supporters, and to build funding relationships for the future Operating Board.

**3. Who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis immediately after approval to lead development of the school? How will this person be compensated prior to the school receiving per-pupil funding?**

**J. Brett Taylor, Ed.D.** will work as the operations manager for the school to develop the location and selection of the school, development of its financial viability, coordination of the startup requirements and deal with the contractors (e.g. transportation, technology, etc.). Dr. Taylor will be paid through funds provided by the Longwood Foundation and other grant making organizations. The board will continue to support this work as outlined above.

**4. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team (beyond the School Leader) ....**

It is expected that the school leadership team will be comprised of the Head of School and an Education Director. Financial, budget and facility support will be provided by an outside third party/consultant. The School leadership team will be identified following approval.

**Head of School:** The Head of School is accountable for the operations of the program and activities of SMS, in keeping with the mission and vision of the school and the direction as set by the SMS Board. The head of school must represent the Board and embody the vision of the school in its relations with faculty, staff, students, families and the community. The preferred candidate for the School Leader will:

- Hold Montessori Certification or have extensive experience with the Montessori philosophy and curriculum

- Have a minimum of 3-5 years of experience working in a Montessori environment preferably as a school or academic leader
- Hold a Master's degree or higher in education or other related field from an accredited institution
- Demonstrate experience with strategic planning
- Comply with the standards for ethical and professional performance established by the State Board of Education
- Demonstrate background knowledge of the fiscal and operating needs of a school
- Actively engage with the students, teachers and parents in supporting the Montessori principles
- Demonstrate a willingness to try innovative approaches to improving student learning

The search will begin upon approval of the charter application with an expected start in January 2018. It is expected that funding raised by Montessori Works will support this position until the school begins to receive funding from the state allocations. Montessori Works will be open to Heads of School who demonstrate a deep understanding of and value for Montessori education who have public school experience in Delaware or the region. Montessori Works will recruit through the NCMPS, the American Montessori Association, National Charter School Networks, traditional Delaware channels including approved programs in Delaware for alternative routes for school leadership.

**Education Director:** The Director of Education is responsible for the consistent quality of the Montessori program within and across grade levels at SMS. The Director of Education works directly with teachers to develop, implement, and supervise education programs that meet the schools mission and goals. The focus of this position is on continual development of the staff to ensure that all children are reaching their full potential. The Education Director will report to the Head of School. The Preferred candidate for Education Director will:

- Hold a Master's degree or higher from an accredited institution.
- Have 3-5 years of experience in working in academic administration or related field.
- Have a valid Delaware Teacher's Certification
- Demonstrate experience in creating and evaluating student programs
- Demonstrate experience working with adults in professional development or coaching situations
- Have Montessori Certified Training or extensive experience in with Montessori philosophy and curriculum

This position will be hired by the Head of School with support from the Operating Board during the interviewing and vetting process. It is expected that this position will be filled by July 1, 2018.