



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

Position starts July 1, 2025
Framingham, Massachusetts



EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE
EXPERTS IN SEARCH, TRANSITION & STRATEGY

THE SUMMIT EXPERIENCE

To be a member of the Summit Montessori School community is to feel welcomed, challenged, and at ease. It is the type of place where a 10-year-old feels emboldened to petition the Head of School for ice cream every day as part of the student experience and the request, while not ultimately not fulfilled, is met with curiosity, meetings with top administration, and a compromised ice cream day tied to a community service project. It is a community where families routinely report that they make lifelong friends on the playground afterschool and forge those relationships while volunteering together at the book fair or working on a math problem at curriculum night. There is a genuine sense of connection and support on staff — it's the sort of place where standards are high, and one is supported to reach these heights with the time and resources needed to get there.

Despite many coming out of Summit saying "it just feels like magic," the Summit experience is no magic trick, it's down to a lot of hard and intentional work done in collaboration at all levels. It begins with a deliberate dedication to building a diverse and inclusive community that is engaging in conversations around equity and justice. The work continues with high standards, mission driven activities, and a commitment to the Montessori method.

MISSION

Summit Montessori School is a community dedicated to developing respectful, self-motivated, life-long learners. Through a challenging, individualized, Montessori-based curriculum, children cultivate their strengths to reach their unique potential and to become active participants in the global community.



HISTORY

Our story begins in 1996 with a group of enthusiastic parents who saw the need for a new Montessori school in the MetroWest area of Boston, one that offered attention to the individual child, an outstanding faculty, and a creative, yet academically rigorous, environment. These parents found an historic Victorian building situated centrally in Framingham.

Summit Montessori School is fully accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS), the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE), and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPA). The school serves approximately 130 students ranging in age from 18 months through the sixth grade.



VALUES

The Summit Montessori School community includes teachers, administrators, students, parents, trustees, alumni and friends of the school. This list of values helps define our community and guide our interactions and growth:

- We base our strong, experiential academic program on Montessori's learner-centered philosophy. As a school community we seek out and explore new ideas, curriculum, and experiences.
- We are a respectful and inclusive community, embracing individuality with interest, excitement, and wonder.
- Together, we build a close community that supports one another like a family. We cherish the many benefits that our small school offers.
- We create a noble and dignified environment that honors our students and families. Our rich and beautifully prepared classrooms invite students to learn, explore, and feel at home.
- We teach and practice peace and conflict resolution in our classrooms, work for peace in the world around us, and are mindful of our impact on the earth.
- Above all, we know and value each individual, educating and nurturing the whole child with love and dignity.





LEARNING AT SUMMIT MONTESSORI

Upon entering the doors of Summit, you immediately feel at home. From the classrooms that feel like true living spaces to the warm greetings from administrators, teachers, and students alike, everyone feels welcome and invited to embrace the learning environment and dig into their Montessori studies. The Head of School's office door stands open to the community and it is a place where you truly feel seen and understood. As one parent put it, "The care and attention of every faculty member for each child, even those not under their direct care will never cease to amaze us. We are so thankful for this community of educators."



Summit Montessori is an independent school with a Montessori philosophy. We embrace new methods and ways of teaching while retaining the core concepts of Maria Montessori, whose revolutionary and scientifically-based ideas have made her namesake schools so successful for over 100 years.

As a school that is small by design, Summit provides an unusually intimate atmosphere; our size allows us to personalize students' educations and celebrate their individuality. We work to provide a strong foundation for a life-long love of learning. We aim to instill confidence in every child, from early childhood to the pre-teen years.



Our focus on each individual is part of our basic value system, which states that, "Above all, we know and value each individual, educating and nurturing the whole child with love and dignity."

We do this by:

- Offering a curriculum that allows each child to learn at their own pace, explore deeply, and follow individual interests to nurture a love of learning.
- Teaching primarily in small groups or one-on-one.
- Nurturing strong relationships between children and adults.
- Supporting children in knowing themselves as learners and as individuals, building confidence, independence, and maturity.
- Educating the whole child, balancing academics with the importance of a peace curriculum, practical life, physical activities, and the arts.





Beginners (Toddlers) Program (Ages 18–36 months)

A peek into the Beginners classroom is always joyful — our youngest emerging learners are busy exploring their world: climbing the stairs to slide down into the reading nook, carefully watering houseplants (and cleaning up the ensuing spills), discovering the functionality of a single knobbed cylinder, and learning to care for their own body and materials. The Beginners Curriculum, housed in a custom-designed child-centered new building, supports the very young child's natural quest to explore the world in a vigorous, hands-on way. It is a “learning by doing” environment in which each child's independence is fostered and supported. It is also a social environment in which toddlers begin to gain a sense of community and an understanding of self.

The Curriculum includes Montessori based:

- Real world practical life skills
- Sensory exploration and discovery
- Language experiences to support the young child's “sensitive period” for language development
- Pre-math skills & concept development
- Exploration of the natural world
- Physical science activities
- Art and music experiences
- Large motor activities
- Daily contact with the outdoor world

Program Highlights

- Two Beginners Classrooms
- For children ages 18 to 36 months (as of September 1)
- Small class size, capped at 9.
- Student/teacher ratio of 9:2.
- Full and half-day options.





Children's House (Ages 3–6 years, including Kindergarten)

Overwhelmingly, visitors to the Children's House program at Summit find themselves in awe of the peaceful and buzzing classroom life in the midst of a morning work cycle. What can feel like magic is in fact the diligent work of faculty dedicated to nurturing the whole child. The Children's House program provides students with a warm and inclusive environment that introduces them to multiple disciplines in the classroom. At this level, children from preschool through Kindergarten come together each working and developing naturally at their own pace. The classroom provides opportunities for interaction, problem-solving, and peer-to-peer learning.

From an academic standpoint, the goal of our program is to ensure that students receive an education that builds a love of learning and confidence that guides them to their elementary pursuits. Well-rounded, thoughtful, joyful, inquisitive, and socially responsible; this is the description of a Summit Montessori Children's House student.

The Curriculum includes Montessori based:

- Real world practical life skills including care of self and environment
- Sensorial materials that build cognitive decision making skills and help them order and classify their world
- A language rich environment that moves the child from pre-literate activities to reading and writing
- Mathematical and numeracy skill building using concrete Montessori math materials
- Cultural curriculum exploring zoology, botany, geography, history, and physical science
- Art, language, nature, and music programs
- Kindergarten leadership programming to prepare the child for elementary including literacy, studio art, and physical education

Program Highlights

- 3 Children's House classrooms
- Ages 2.9 - 6 years old
- Full day and half day options
- Student/teacher ratio 10:1
- Specials include Spanish, Library, Nature, Music Studio Art (K), Gym (K)



Lower Elementary (Ages 6-9; Grades 1, 2, 3)

The Lower Elementary program engages students in first, second, and third grades in a wide range of academic subjects with a focus on building critical thinking, problem-solving, and research skills. The growing Lower Elementary classroom is awash with sunlight, providing space for students to work collaboratively at a rug or table or to find a nook just right for individual work. Lower Elementary at Summit is vibrant and alive with the sounds of laughter, learning, and collaborative problem solving.

Within the Montessori elementary curriculum, all disciplines are viewed as interrelated, united by a framework of understanding that all living and nonliving things are connected. While the children focus daily on specific disciplines in order to gain appropriate skills and competencies, they also emerge from their elementary years with a fundamental understanding of the interconnectedness of all subjects. The child is sparked by the big cosmic stories of the creation of our world and carries that sense of wonder into all of their learning, asking big questions and learning to find the answers. This awareness supports their skills of analysis, critical thinking and problem solving, and also enhances their self-awareness as global citizens.

The Curriculum includes Montessori based:

- Mathematics (including arithmetic, geometry, measurement, and probability)
- Language (including speaking, listening, writing, reading, and grammar)
- Cultural Studies (including geography, history, and science).
- Regular engagement in Music, Visual Arts, Naturalist Program, Physical Education, and Spanish.
- Practical life activities that support metacognition skills such as executive functioning and time management
- Socio-emotional programming to help students navigate their emerging sense of self within a community

Program Highlights

- One expanded Lower Elementary classroom
- Ages six through nine (grades 1-3)
- Student to teacher ratio 10:1
- Full day program
- Field trips are integrated into the curriculum on a three year cycle to sites such as Old Sturbridge Village, the Arnold Arboretum, and local art museums.





Upper Elementary Program (Ages 9-12; Grades 4, 5, 6)

The older one gets at Summit, the higher you climb. At the top of the building sits the Upper Elementary classroom. With larger bodies and much larger topics to explore, they take over the third floor with big questions and big responsibilities. Their emerging sense of self and identity come into view as they navigate interpersonal relationships, big topics, and leadership responsibilities. The Upper Elementary Program at Summit is composed of a single 4th-6th grade combined multiage classroom. As students progress, the most senior become classroom and school leaders, continuing a cycle of peer mentoring and cooperation. All Upper Elementary students are considered school leaders and stewards, routinely engaging in activities such as serving as morning arrival greeters and campus-wide recycling collectors that support the entire Summit community. Students in the Upper Elementary level engage in individual work as well as collaborative activity in both small and larger groups.

The Curriculum includes Montessori based:

- Mathematics (building on Lower Elementary work towards abstraction and advanced work on geometry, fractions, ratios, percentages, and an introduction to statistics and probability and beginning to work on algebraic functions)
- Language Arts (including reading and analyzing fiction and non fiction in small group literature circles, writing essays, research papers, and creative writing)
- Public Speaking (oral presentations, performing arts, and extemporaneous debate)
- Cultural Studies (History, Geography, Botany, Zoology, and Physical Science on a three year cycle with emphasis placed on research and presentation skills)
- Socio-emotional and self-identity work integrated into the school day and curriculum
- Music, Visual Arts, Spanish, Naturalist program, and Physical Education are integrated as important areas of special interest.

The sixth year in the Summit Elementary Program is considered to be the capstone year of a student's experience at Summit.

Program Highlights

- One Upper Elementary Classroom
- Ages nine through twelve (grades 4-6)
- Student to teacher ratio 12:1
- Full day program
- Leadership opportunities
- Community service
- Field trips are integrated into the curriculum on a three year cycle, including overnight trips to Nature's Classroom and long range travel by the sixth year students

Sixth Grade Highlights

- Sixth graders engage in long range travel to cities like New York or Washington DC to participate in meaningful programming that illustrates global citizenship and practical ways they can engage in being peacemakers in their world
- Development and presentation of a year-long Senior Research Project.
- Planning and implementation of micro economies to raise funds for significant projects
- Senior speeches at graduation.
- Opportunities for leadership and internships within the school.



Extended Programs

Summit offers several extended programs in addition to the regular school day including EarlyCare, AfterCare, afterschool Explorations, vacation camps, and Summer at Summit. These programs help parents navigate the challenges of childcare during school breaks and beyond the school day.

These programs feature:

- Cross level programming
- Focus on sports, arts, gross motor play, and socio-emotional growth
- EarlyCare covers drop offs before school hours
- AfterCare runs until 5:00 (Beginners) or 5:30 (Children's House or Elementary)
- Explorations offer once a week hobby-based programming
- Vacation camps cover childcare needs during longer school year breaks
- Summer at Summit covers 9-10 weeks of the summer break for Beginners and Children's House and 2-3 weeks of Elementary camp. These camps feature weekly thematic programming outside of the Montessori curriculum





PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The year begins with the Summit Montessori Parents Association's annual Back to School picnic - a lively potluck that brings the community back together again to kick off a new school year. Before June rolls around again, parents will have shared books as Friday morning readers, served up heaps of mashed potatoes at the Thanksgiving feast, laminated cards during Materials Committee, shadowed their child's Montessori learning at Parent-Child work night, attended curriculum nights, level transitions meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and Head of School coffees, and so much more. Parents serve as an integral part of the community and opportunities for participation in the daily life of the school abound.

As stated in our Core Values, we are committed to being "a respectful and inclusive community, embracing individuality with interest, excitement, and wonder." This translates to a culture in which we:

- Welcome new families with openness.
- Accept and respect one another and ourselves.
- Approach our work and relationships with flexibility and appreciation of differences.
- Incorporate the cultures, languages, religions, and traditions of the world.

Summit Montessori Parent Association (SMPA)

A primary way that Summit partners with parents and family supporters is through the Summit Montessori Parent Association (SMPA). SMPA is a collaboration of parents and school staff to plan, organize, and mobilize our community's volunteers in the most helpful way possible. They host picnics, holiday events, the annual Book Fair, and offer valuable support to teachers in so many ways.

A CULTURE OF GIVING

Summit accomplishes its work with the limited resources of a small institution through the vision and diligence of dedicated teachers, administrators, trustees, volunteers, and donors. Our extended community helps lay the foundation for a viable, solvent future and a strong educational program through its generous and regular annual giving. Summit's vitality relies on active support from parents and families in our community. Voluntary contributions of time, talent, and financial gifts enable our programs to flourish and be the strongest they can be.





BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Summit Montessori School is a non-profit institution governed by a Board of Trustees. Trustees deeply believe in Summit's mission and dedicate their effort and resources to serve its community. The Board is composed of current and past parents and grandparents, alumni, and individuals from the larger Boston-area who bring expertise in independent schools, finance, development, facility management, and other professional fields.

Board Committees

The Board of Trustees leads several working committees to support the school. Committees include:

- Development Committee: responsible for supporting the school's operating budget through annual and capital fundraising
- Finance Committee: responsible for budgetary oversight and supporting analysis of the school's financial health
- Building & Grounds Committee: responsible for overseeing the school's physical facilities and grounds, including maintenance and capital improvements
- Governance Committee: responsible for ensuring best practices governance within the Board of Trustees

In addition, the Board works closely with members of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee, which is responsible for steering the school's vision for DEI and recommending best practices.



CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES/ CHALLENGES AT SUMMIT

Enrollment Design and Campus Planning

The next Head of School will have the opportunity to strategically shape the future of our enrollment, balancing growth with the limitations of physical space. There is room for innovative planning and creative solutions to optimize our facilities and use of campus outdoor space while maintaining our “small by design” mentality and providing a high-quality educational experience for all students.

Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of High-Quality Staff

Staff quality and stability has been the number one driver of enrollment and student retention in recent years. The next Head of School will lead efforts to continue recruiting, hiring, and retaining exceptional employees who will enrich the Summit community. This opportunity involves fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace culture that values and celebrates diverse perspectives and strives to ensure that our professional community reflects the diversity of our student body and community.

Strategic initiatives (new plan) + Accreditation AMS/AISNE

The next Head of School will begin their tenure at the culmination of the AMS and AISNE re-accreditation process, using insights from both to shape Summit's next strategic plan. This role provides a unique opportunity to align the school's long-term goals with best practices and accreditation standards, particularly around DEI, while driving continuous improvement and excellence.

Endowment

The next Head of School will play a pivotal role in enhancing the school's endowment in an effort to secure the financial sustainability of the institution. This opportunity involves leveraging philanthropic partnerships, prudent fiscal stewardship and management, and strategic investments to support the school's long-term educational mission and growth.





LEADERSHIP POSITION

Summit Montessori is a nurturing, child-centered environment that has benefited from extraordinary leadership for over a decade. The next leader will enter a school with a sound financial outlook, a supportive Board, committed administrators, faculty and staff, engaged parents, and delightful children.

Leadership and personal qualities desired in the next Head of School:

- A confident and humble leader who understands and respects the Summit journey that has resulted in its emergence as an exemplar Montessori school
- A self-aware leader with a collaborative leadership style; experience fostering an environment where the professional community can grow and develop
- A deep understanding of and commitment to the value of a Montessori education
- A capacity to inspire and engage constituents around the school's values, mission, and identity as a Montessori institution
- A demonstrated track record in championing authentic diversity, fostering an inclusive community environment, and striving towards equity and justice in our communities both locally and globally
- A hands-on leadership style and willingness to enthusiastically pitch in at all levels of school operations, from day-to-day needs to strategic visioning
- An ability to hire and retain highly competent faculty and staff and to develop pathways for their continued professional growth
- A commitment to building and sustaining a highly effective relationship with the Board
- An understanding of the value of parents/caregivers as partners in the education of their children
- Demonstrated experience in finance, management & delegation, human resources, risk management, and general operations of a school
- An active listener and effective communicator who can articulate a future vision for Summit Montessori School
- A commitment to earning the trust of all constituent groups through transparency and open communication
- Minimum of three years of demonstrated leadership and management skills



SUMMARY OF THE SEARCH PROCESS

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials in a single merged pdf file to Mary Seppala as soon as possible. Dossiers will be reviewed upon receipt.

- EC Summary Sheet (Contact Mary Seppala for this document)
- Letter of Interest addressed to the Search Committee
- Current Resume
- Statement of Educational Leadership Philosophy
- A list of five or more references with contact information (name, relationship to candidate, phone and email address)
- Disclosure Statement (Contact Mary Seppala for this document)

Send application materials via email to:

Mary Seppala, Partner, Educators Collaborative
Email: mseppala@educatorscollaborative.com
Phone: 610-772-7625



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