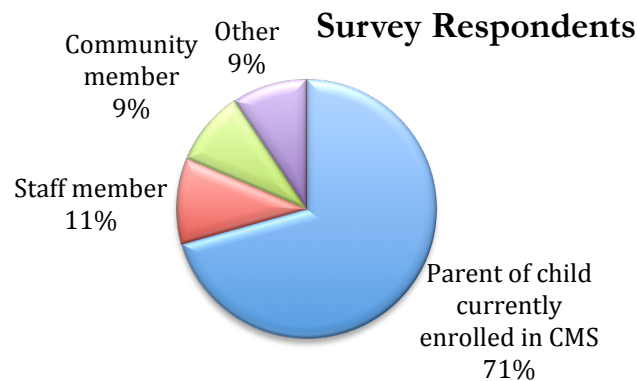




In June 2016, the CMS Board of Trustees invited the CMS community to share input on the most important attributes they would like to see in a Head of School. There were 71 responses to the survey, and the breakdown of participants was as follows:



In addition to input on the most important attributes for a Head of School, the survey yielded feedback about the operations and administration of the school; that feedback has been shared in a separate report with the Board of Trustees and Interim Head of School. Additionally, some respondents offered candidate-specific feedback; a separate confidential report with candidate-specific feedback has been shared with the CMS Head of School Search Committee.

The skills, experiences, and personality traits that the CMS community feels that the search committee should be looking for as it evaluates candidates for the Corvallis Montessori School Head of School are listed below in order of frequency with which they were mentioned, with representative quotes.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES

Montessori (specifically AMI) training, certification, understanding, and experience. (32)

- Fully and formally AMI trained, AMI certified, AMI experienced, AMI accredited - not just an online certification - to ensure highest quality of Montessori program
- Knowledge of Montessori pedagogy at all educational levels
- Someone that is AMI certified and can teach in a classroom and can lead CMS faculty by example
- Excellent understanding of Montessori philosophy and how this method is unique and special from other educational models.
- Understanding of integrity towards Montessori principals and operations
- Strong grounding in Montessori methods
- Passion for Montessori approach (understanding and demonstrated on-going engagement, e.g. attending conferences, continuing education, certification)
- The HoS needs to have a strong foundation in Montessori methods and philosophy; however, I would advise against hiring a "Montessori fundamentalist," i.e. someone who believes that, if Maria

Montessori didn't do it, we shouldn't either. That kind of perspective eliminates a lot of important subjects and experiences from the classroom and demonstrates a rigidity of thinking that, ultimately, won't benefit the school.

- The head must be AMI certified and have 5+ years of Montessori teaching experience at each of the primary and elementary levels to be fully and deeply aware of the workings and needs of a high quality Montessori school.

Excellent communication skills (22)

- We need someone who communicates openly/honestly, clearly, concisely, respectfully, regularly/frequently, and effectively with all stakeholders - parents, staff, children, and community.
- Ability to describe wants and needs in a way that is both clear and respectful to employees
- Ability to communicate well with parents (especially pertaining to any changes that may be occurring).
- I think the Head of School should be a Great Communicator (organized, regular newsletters and clear expectations of parents/children)
- Talking to parents and regular meetings with the school population and not relying on a thousand emails that are long and that no one reads as the only outlet of communication. Picking up the phone occasionally to check in with families. Or answering voicemails.
- Excellent communicator, both verbal and written.
- Individual must be able to effectively communicate important information to parents without over communicating.
- Someone who can keep up clear and engaging communication with all the stakeholders (parents, board members, staff, etc.). Someone who can articulate the ongoing goals of the school, explain why these goals are a priority, and keep others apprised on the progress towards them.
- Inclusive communication style for Montessori families.
- This person should have a record of establishing clear communication with all members of the school community.

Experience – as a Montessori guide, Head of School, in leadership roles (21)

- Previous experience running (being Head of School) of a Montessori School
- Experience directing/running an organization of this size successfully,
- Classroom teaching experience is a must
- Prior education/teaching experience in the Montessori method as an AMI guide
- Many years of classroom experience, extensive experience with the elementary program (not just primary)
- A minimum requirement of at least 10 years as a head of school.
- Ideally both a great teacher and a great administrator, though this combination may be rare.
- Someone who has deep experience with Montessori and teaching across many years,
- The HOS needs to have experience serving in leadership roles with positive recommendations from those that have been led.
- Strong and confident educator
- Also, given how small our school is, this person should bring specific teaching expertise to contribute and enhance the school's offerings, for example, in music, art, sport, theater, dance, or languages.

Business Management Skills (19)

- Documented management experience not just teaching experience
- Marketing experience would be helpful in building the school's image and increasing enrollment
- Administrative diligence
- Administration and financial experience
- Non-profit and/or educational institution fiscal and management experience/knowledge
- Prior management experience desirable even if in another setting
- Administrative experience, with an budget of similar proportion to that of the CMS
- Someone with administrative experience who understands running a business and having employees.
- An administrator with extensive managerial and financial experience in both making tuition as affordable as possible, and recruiting/retaining outstanding staff by optimizing compensation and workplace culture.
- Experience with strategic planning and managing projects in a manner that is inclusive and transparent
- Good administration skills are key (although the Board and other institutional structures should be in place to support that)
- Excellent operational background (has successfully led a large educational nonprofit);
- Ability to maintain stability (financial, enrollments, staffing)

Strong commitment to (and love for) children (17)

- Provide a nurturing and a sustainable place for the KIDS to learn and grow
- Someone who puts children first
- Good experience managing a child-centered community center
- Passion for comprehensive care of the child/family unit
- Focused on student success
- Intense commitment to the welfare of children
- An individual who has the students'/children's best interests in mind
- A believer in that kids come first; first and foremost, think of the children
- As well, this leader has a tenderness for the developmental stages of children, especially young children, and disciplines not as an authoritarian but as creative and sensitive problem-solver with children: they see the "whole child" beyond the classroom, and not just the "problem" at hand.
- True best interest of children
- Respect for students
- Love of children and understanding of their educational needs.
- Someone who is fundamentally and naturally cheerful, patient, and kind with children
- Commitment to children's rights and encouraging them to express themselves
- I think the head of school must have deep passion and commitment to the wellbeing of the children - far above and beyond his/her commitment to staff, Board, and parents (although these are of course to be valued too).

Vision and readiness/ability to take CMS to next phase/level (17)

- Somebody who is strong yet humble enough to take this institution to new levels
- Commitment to creating a stable and nurturing environment
- A unique vision to build the image and goals of the school
- A team builder; has a vision and plan for a sustainable Montessori program that is not just daycare

- A commitment to the short-term survival and long-term success of CMS; this includes a vision, a plan, and an ability to attract and retain excellent staff, and to attract and retain families.
- Organizational-development talent toward building enrollment and cementing CMS's reputation in Corvallis as a stable, laudable and high-quality educational resource.
- Have a clear vision for the future of the school, especially with respect to improving education and the community of its members
- Vision for developing a strong elementary program, without which the school will not be attractive to families that are searching for a long-term engagement with the Montessori program
- Ability to grow and strengthen programs and a concrete plan for growth.
- A solid plan for longevity of CMS and revival of the elementary program.
- Vision for long-term financial stability of school.
- Someone that gets things done and has proved that in past experience
- This person must have the knowledge, ideas, and character to lead the whole school community towards a shared vision
- Helping school staff, board, community develop and implement vision and goals

Sound management skills to hire and lead staff (17)

- Experience working with teachers as a collaborative team
- Ability to effectively delegate work to and communicate with employees
- HR experience - demonstrated ability/experience with a range of personnel management issues, including hiring, supervising, and termination
- Good people management skills
- The head of school needs to be able to mentor and manage guides in a collaborative, non-threatening manner to improve instruction and retain staff. He or she also needs to be able to recruit new guides and support personnel.
- Strong team-building skills
- Demonstrable experience hiring talent; ability to identify key qualities when hiring staff
- Attract, retain & develop excellent staff especially Guides
- A supervisor with unusual talent in interpersonal relations who brings out the best in all around him or her.
- To be able to hire the right teachers for the classrooms, instead of micromanagement
- Should not try to control every aspect of the school
- One who can inspire and mentor teachers while continually enhancing the work/learning environment.
- This person must be able to attract, retain, and INSPIRE the best teachers and staff.
- This person should have a record of establishing sound personnel management

Ability to build and maintain relationships with parents, children, staff, community (16)

- Cordial relationships and report with families, children/students, teachers, and support staff
- Proven track record of building relationships with community through outreach, fundraising, or other means
- Strong social skills to relate with parent community and child community
- Able to balance the needs/demands of multiple stakeholders, including the students, teachers and staff, parents, CMS board, and the community
- Able to work with the balance that's required for parents/students/other stakeholders
- Able to work with all types of people be they guides, staff, board members or prospective parents.
- Ability to build and sustain positive relationships within and outside of the CMS community.
- Actively interested and engaged with Montessori families

- The HOS needs to be able to interact equally well with a 3 yr old student, a parent, a potential donor, and any member of the larger Corvallis community.
- One who is approachable by anyone and who visibly enjoys proactively getting to know all parents, setting them at ease, and earning the support of parents by working with all parents for the best interest of each child.
- Honor each person in the school community as an individual, with their own challenges and triumphs
- I would hope the new HOS is someone with a high emotional IQ and is relational not with just CMS staff but with children and parents as well

Fiscal awareness, responsibility, transparency, and experience (16)

- Financial knowledge to run school within operating budget
- Someone who can work to address the needs of families with two working parents and tight budgets; be aware of parent limitations
- Experience (and success!) managing a school and/or a budget
- Fiscal experience and a proven record of fiscal responsibility and accountability
- The ability to create a budget, follow the budget and report on finances on a monthly basis to the board. He or she doesn't need to be an accountant, but does need to be able to read a financial statement, manage money and keep tabs on income and expenses.
- A good HOS should be fiscally aware and responsible, understanding the underpinnings of the financial statements, not just the bottom line, to allow the school to grow.
- Fiscal management-able to spend wisely, stay within budget & make most of tuition money
- Fiscal transparency
- This person should have a record of establishing sound fiscal policy

Strong ambassador and face of school, both externally and internally (14)

- A Head of School should be an ambassador of the school, and in this capacity, should have excellent inter-personal skills
- Ability to present the Montessori philosophy to prospective families so they get a clear vision of what their child would be experiencing
- Should set the tone of the school. However, this must be accomplished in a politic way with finesse, education and community building rather than inflexibility.
- A visible level of positive, professional energy that is obvious to parents, children, and staff in the morning (I think this is really a small but important part of beginning the day on the right foot), and also to the community - especially in terms of attracting new families and donors.
- Someone who is personable and good with both parents and kids. who has genuine smile in their eyes as they greet the new arrivals every morning. who puts a good face on the school as representing everything that CMS stands for.
- Head of School, like a lot of leadership positions, has a cheerleader component. They set the tone for how others relate to the school and to each other.
- The HOS represents the school, and needs to be able to be out in the community, positively representing CMS
- Warm, charming presence and welcoming/ warm personality as the face of CMS to the community
- Advocate (marketing/engagement with the Corvallis community: prospective families, existing/past CMS families, OSU, School District, businesses, other schools)
- He/she must have a documented record of warmth, sociability and strong presence in order to be spokesperson showing off the best qualities of personability
- This person must be able to attract and retain new families to our school community.

Leadership (13)

- Hire somebody who can stabilize the institution and leads with an example.
- Able to be a strong leader to CMS staff, students, and families
- It would be amazing if the Head of School could inspire parents, children, and staff
- An excellent proven record of responsible benevolent leadership
- Should instill trust within staff members and the community

Genuine care and support for staff (12)

- Strong professional drive to make CMS a good place for its staff members to thrive
- Help the guides in their professional growth; mentoring and developing staff
- Our staff are our most valued asset - they make the magic of Montessori happen. I feel that we need to find someone who can hire and manage staff in a way that creates less turnover and drama.
- Someone who takes care of staff and is focused on staff success
- Interested in nurturing guides and assistants and supporting them.
- Strong recommendations from staff that have been supervised by the candidate
- I would like for the person hired to be skilled in working peacefully and compassionately with all staff and faculty.
- This person must earn the respect of our talented and dedicated teachers.
- Has the trust and support of teachers and staff.

Community builder (10)

- Valuing and creating opportunities to build cohesiveness and boost morale through regular formal and informal gatherings of parents, staff and students.
- Someone who understands the value of community, and brings that into all of his/her work.
- CMS has such great potential to be a strong community, and that should be evident in the relationships we build - between children, between parents, between staff and children, between staff and parents. A strong community will drive the school's reputation and will help enrollment.
- Someone who can help create a family/community feel at the school where we are all working toward the same goals and having fun
- Establishing and maintaining good relations with parents, alumni parents, alumni students, donors and the community at large in order to create and grow a vibrant, engaged, peaceful community
- Someone who can build bridges, bring people together
- This person needs to be committed to building up CMS, bringing people together, building a community where members of CMS want to participate and contribute time and money
- Thoughtful partnership strategies with school families and broader community

Ability to mediate and manage conflict/skilled in conflict resolution (9)

- Should be a good mediator in conflict resolution
- Someone works through mediation to solve problems
- Ability to support and mediate
- Demonstrable record of bringing people together to work through disagreements
- The head of school needs to be a good listener, who can make people feel heard, even if decisions don't go their way. Any school is going to have conflicts; it's the job of the head of school to handle these compassionately and professionally so that individual conflicts don't grow into school-wide crises.

- Must be able to give numerous examples of working with colleagues in the past to overcome difficult work environment.
- Patience and skills to help staff, parents, children work through challenges
- This person needs to be capable of handling the prickly and difficult situations that can arise when the focus is on children and their specific challenges and needs

Ability to welcome and engage with a diverse student, parent, and staff community (6)

- Ability to engage with a diverse student and parent body
- Welcoming to a diverse community and demonstrating that in hiring, education facilities, curriculum, and events (e.g., welcoming to LGBTQ students/families, international students/families, non-religious students/families, etc.)
- A solid plan for how to increase diversity (including socio-economic) and tolerance for difference amongst our families, students and staff.
- LGBTQ Friendly, as many of our staff are LGBTQ
- This person must be able to meaningfully engage with a diverse group of parents

Thoughtful decision-making. Creative problem solving. (6)

- Wisdom and patience to think through foreseeable consequences before acting
- Someone who is thoughtful and doesn't make split decisions
- Not quick in judgment or decision-making
- Kind, thoughtful & deliberative in decisions

Collaborative approach (5)

- I think a leader is a collaborator, working with other members of the CMS community to assess needs of the school and students
- Someone skilled in building a collaborative culture, primarily with parents and staff, while also working well with other community and board members.
- Should display a spirit of cooperation and openness

Organizational skills and ability to multi-task (5)

- Organizational skills (juggling many different tasks/focuses) and follow-through

A fresh start (4)

- No baggage/history with the school
- Someone who isn't a divisive figure; someone who doesn't have a negative history with the school.
- I feel strongly this must be an external candidate.
- Internal candidates will be an obstacle in the healing our community and threaten the long-term viability of our school. We need to rebuild trust, and at this point it can only come from outside

Experience developing community partnerships (4)

- Strong interest in making connections with the business community and wants to bring in more board members with a diverse background
- This person should have a vision to enhance connections between our school and the larger Corvallis community and the ability to connect with the broader Corvallis Community

Fundraising/grant writing experience (4)

- Innovative and able to come up with financial solutions

Open to new ideas (4)

- Taking advantage of the knowledge of others to aid in their decisions.
- Accepting of new ideas from membership & board of trustees

Open to criticism; willingness to apologize and correct mistakes (4)

- Willingness to acknowledge areas of weakness and hire staff/volunteers that complements/augments these areas
- Willingness to solicit input from membership, which means also open to criticism
- The ability to sincerely apologize and correct his/her mistakes
- When to be humble and curious and ask for assistance and feedback from the larger community.

Solid understanding of and adherence to principles of non-profit governance (4)

- Understanding of role of Head of School vs Board - i.e. the Board hires the head of school...and the head of school is then responsible for all other hirings and dismissals
- The ability to discern which situations are to be handled by the HOS alone
- Has the ability to respect and work with the board, but stand up to them as well
- Familiar with non-profit bylaws
- Experience working with board of trustee

Excellent PR experience and skills (4)

Ability to heal the community (4)

- Plan for repairing CMS relationships within the school and with the community, including families that have left in the past year or so
- Will need to help the school rebuild within and without
- Ability to unify our community

Ability to listen (3)

- Someone who really listens to parent concerns, instead of brushing them aside or belittling them
- Ability to listen to and communicate between many different kinds of people

Supportive of dual-language classrooms, Spanish-speaking abilities (3)

- The new Head of School, if not bilingual or proficient in Spanish, should have an enthusiasm for the relatively new bilingual program, which has been fantastic
- Extremely supportive of bilingual program; committed to continuing dual-language classrooms

Passion for education (3)

- Genuine passion for education
- Someone who visibly loves their work as an educator.

Ability to work diplomatically with parents (3)

- The person needs to be able to deal with educated parents who feel their opinions are valid and even so important that they should be consulted before major decisions. (Right or wrong, many Montessori parents are this way, & head of school has to deal with it.)
- Strong personality that can deal with the many "highly educated" complainers.
- I believe a good HOS should have an accommodating personality, but not allow the school to be buffaloes or bullied by demanding parents. A good HOS should uphold their standards and not kowtow to artificial parental standards.

Accountable (2)

- Willingness to be accountable to the Board/report to the Board

Commitment (2)

- Won't leave after a few years
- Passion for the program and the school

Past experience with other "troubled" institutions (2)

- Experience rebuilding from the ground up
- An administrator who has proven experience spanning many years building enrollment across all program levels while overcoming obstacles relevant to CMS

Respectful of parents (2)

Commitment to customer service (1)

Has raised children within their own household (1)

Ability to improvise (1)

Ability to jump into multiple roles (1)

Ability to adapt easily to different situations and personality styles. (1)

Equipped and capable of dealing with misbehavior (1)

Fair & equitable without regard to a family's wealth and/or community status (1)

He/she must have no tendency toward collusion and secrecy or bending to the will of a misguided minority of players in the school that were not elected (1)

Not use position to gain social status (1)

Commitment to Outdoor play (1)

Preferably master's degree (1)

Zero tolerance for bullying (1)

Ability to command respect of others through self-confidence and competence (1)

PERSONALITY TRAITS:

Desired personality traits are listed in order of frequency mentioned in the survey, with 'transparent' having been mentioned 8 times, the traits listed in a single column 3-7 times, those in the two columns mentioned twice, and each of the traits in the three columns at the bottom were mentioned once.

Transparent

Honest

Kind

Approachable

Fair/impartial/equitable

Respectful

Friendly

Warm presence

Patient

Compassionate

Enthusiastic

Ethical

Flexible

Inclusive

Personable

Sense of humor

Welcoming

Thoughtful

Calm

Charismatic personality

Cheerful

Confidence

Consistent

Cooperative

Creativity

Dependable

Diplomatic

Emotionally Stable

Endearing

Fun

Grace

Helpful and supportive

Humble

Innovative

Joyful

Modest

Morally blameless

Nice

Open

Outgoing

People skills

Personality

Pleasing demeanor

Reliable

Social

Spirited

Steady in temper

Strong personality

Supportive

Visible

Visionary