



## Head of School Opportunity

### Chicago, Illinois

Brickton Montessori School seeks candidates for the position of Head of School to begin in August 2020. We seek a dynamic educational leader who is committed to the Montessori philosophy and eager to continue the school's growth and development. We seek an individual who shares our vision and focus on students as well as our commitment to the mission and to maintaining the culture that makes our school so unique and special. The strength of our faculty and administrative staff is unparalleled. Our enrollment has been steady. Our students are thriving at every level and excel in moving on to some of the best public and independent high schools in the Chicagoland area and colleges in the country. Our families are involved and supportive with their time and talent.

### **Application Deadline: March 22, 2020**

#### **Mission**

Brickton Montessori School: A community of confident, compassionate, competent learners. Brickton Bold.

#### **Vision**

Brickton Montessori School follows the time-tested, evidence-based Montessori approach to education, honoring the child as a whole, fostering a global mindset through peace education, with a commitment to educational leadership and institutional longevity.

#### **Overview**

Brickton Montessori School is an independent non-profit school located at the far northwest side of Chicago, at 8622 W Catalpa, Chicago, IL. We are a five-minute drive from O'Hare International Airport and a ten-minute walk to the CTA Blue Line train.

Brickton Montessori School is accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Independent Schools of the Central States (ISACS) and is a full member of the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools (AIMS) and the Lake Michigan Association of Independent Schools (LMAIS). We are registered and recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) as a non-public school and area member of the Illinois Coalition for Non-Public Schools. We have achieved the Gold Circle of Quality from ExceleRate Illinois for Early Learning Providers. We hold licenses from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the City of Chicago.

Brickton is a tax-exempt organization under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is a non-sectarian, non-profit, corporation managed by a board of directors, at least 51% of whom must be parents of enrolled children.

In the summer of 1986, a group of dedicated Montessori parents and Montessori teachers met together to explore the possibility of establishing a new school. BMS was first born in the basement of St. Anslem's church in Park Ridge. Later that summer, the school moved into a vacant space within Pennoyer Elementary School, located in the nearby town of Norridge serving children from age two to 12, with one toddler class, one 3-6 class and one 6-12 class. To facilitate growth, in August 1989, Brickton moved to its current location on West Catalpa. At our new site, we began with one toddler class, two 3-6 classes and one 6-12 class. Eventually we added a Middle School program in August 2002 and most recently a Nido program in the spring of 2019.

With input from the community, the Board developed the **2016-2021 Strategic Plan** which revolves around five key areas that will help us reach our vision:

1. **Outstanding Education.** Provide a Montessori educational experience that inspires and engages students to become lifelong learners while providing a comprehensive academic curriculum that meets each child's educational needs.
2. **Effective learning environments.** Ensure Brickton's learning spaces provide a supportive Montessori educational environment and opportunity for the community to come together.
3. **Nurturing community.** Build and strengthen the connections between all school stakeholders to support a vibrant school community.
4. **Building awareness of Brickton.** Develop a strategic approach to marketing that leads to stable, full enrollment with a waitlist every year.
5. **Financial discipline.** Ensure Brickton's long-term financial security.

Our current Head of School has served in this role since 2011. The Faculty is comprised of 10 Directresses and Directors who are supported by 7 classroom assistants. In addition to the Faculty, the administrative team reporting to the Head of School includes a Finance Director, a Development Director, an Elementary and Middle School Coordinator, a Children's House Coordinator, a Volunteer/Scheduling Coordinator and an Administrative Assistant. In total, each year approximately 140 students from 110 families make up one Nido classroom, one Toddler classroom, four Children's House classrooms, one Lower Elementary class, one Upper Elementary class, and one Middle School classroom.

Brickton Montessori School is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 6 to 11 members, each with a minimum three-year term. The Board actively supports the school and currently consists of ten directors: eight current parents, one alumni parent and one alumnus. The Board has fiduciary responsibility for the school and is focused primarily on the school's long-term success and ability to deliver its mission. The Board provides strategic direction and works with the Head of School on the five areas outlined in the school's strategic plans. Currently, the Board and its Site Committee is working actively with the Head of School to secure a permanent site with the goal of moving in the summer of 2022.

Brickton has an annual budget of about \$1.67 million dollars that is covered at roughly 95% by tuition income with annual fundraising through the Annual Fund and a Spring Fundraiser making up the difference. Faculty and staff salaries comprise 54% of expenses.



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### Professional Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree in Education, Education Administration, or Business Administration preferred.
- Minimum of five years of classroom experience at either the pre-school, elementary, or middle school level.
- American Montessori Society (AMS) Administrator Credential or AMS Teaching Credential with a degree in Education Administration required.

### Leadership Qualities:

- A leader who advocates for and inspires teachers and who is committed to ongoing professional development.
- A progressive educator who is knowledgeable about current educational best practices.
- A leader with excellent administrative skills, including the ability to multitask and delegate appropriately.
- Strong business acumen including wise stewardship of financial, physical, and human resources.
- A track record of success in planning, budgeting, and financial management.
- The ability and willingness to participate fully in the external aspects of school leadership, including playing a leadership role in marketing and fundraising.
- Excellent communication and community building skills with the ability to understand a variety of perspectives.
- Open-minded, collaborative, and transparent, yet also willing and able to make decisions and set appropriate boundaries and expectations.
- Outgoing and approachable to students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni.
- Appreciative of and eager to lead our school community.
- A visionary leader with the ability to achieve long-term, strategic initiatives.
- Strong, personal integrity with a commitment to honesty and ethical leadership.

## Head of School Duties and Responsibilities:

The Head of School provides instructional, brand, operational and financial leadership. The Head of School must also effectively manage the school to achieve growth, while maintaining a nurturing, inclusive educational environment.

- ***Instructional Leadership***
  - Provides support, guidance and mentoring to classroom teachers to execute Montessori philosophy, curriculum and appropriate progress monitoring and assessment.
  - Ensures appropriate professional development goals are pursued by lead teaching faculty.
  - Participates in appropriate professional development to improve instructional leadership.
  - Adheres to the American Montessori Society Code of Ethics (see attached).
- ***Brand Leadership***
  - Supports the mission and goals and objectives of the school
  - Ensures excellence of academic and extracurricular programs.
  - Supports marketing, advertising and branding activities to further public position of the school.
- ***Operational Leadership***
  - Motivates faculty and staff in a professional, respectful and compassionate manner.
  - Participates in development of and execution of school strategic plan working collaboratively with board of directors, staff, parents and other stakeholders.
  - Ensures completion of all requirements to maintain AMS accreditation, DCFS licensure, ISACS accreditation, ISBE recognition and be in compliance with all city and state regulations.
  - Maintains open communication with the community with high visibility at the school on a day-to-day basis.
  - Ensures completion of annual performance evaluations for all faculty and staff.
- ***Financial Leadership***
  - Develops annual budget in conjunction with the Finance Director and Board Treasurer.
  - Manages resource allocation decisions to maintain adherence to school budget.
  - Oversees and participates in school fundraising efforts.
  - Manages and oversees Capital Campaign for a proposed new location.

## Opportunities and Challenges for the Head of School:

- **Attracting, Retaining, and Motivating Faculty and Staff.** Brickton enjoys a highly engaged and talented faculty and staff. Continuing to attract top talent and motivating each employee to deliver curriculum and programming grounded in Montessori philosophy and educational best practices are important responsibilities of Head of School. The next Head must promote ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff and should create an atmosphere of teamwork and collaboration between all faculty and staff members.
- **Optimizing Administrative Operations.** Brickton is accustomed to operating with a lean administrative structure. Although the school has expanded the administrative team in recent years, the next Head of School will need to continue to evaluate the administrative structure and make recommendations for enhancements, while continuing to manage finances carefully.
- **Managing Re-accreditation and Licensing Requirements.** Beginning with a self-study year, re-accreditation began in the 2019-2020 school year with an evaluation visit planned in spring 2021. While this is a substantial undertaking, Brickton has strong institutional knowledge from participating in prior accreditation process cycles and is well positioned for re-accreditation. Brickton has dual accreditation from the American Montessori Society (AMS) and the Independent Schools of the Central States (ISACS), and each has new and emerging standards to consider for this next cycle. The next Head of School will be expected to lead this effort as well as manage ongoing licensing requirements for the Nido and Toddler programs
- **Stewarding Financial Resources.** Brickton needs to continue to plan for long-term financial sustainability. The current Head of School has made initial progress on negotiating financing for the new site. The Head of School is responsible for effective budgeting and sound financial management of school operations. Budgets should continue to be developed based on actual costs from the prior year and thoughtful forecasting. The Head also should continue to cultivate Brickton's current and past donors, along with the board, as it moves toward a Capital Campaign to fund the new site.
- **Managing and overseeing all aspects of a future permanent site.** Working with architects, attorneys, contractors, city officials, financing agencies, and the board appointed Site Committee, the Head of School will be the day to day coordinator of these efforts, until such time that the project requires a construction manager.



## ***Application Process***

If you are interested in the position of Head of School at Brickton Montessori School, please submit your application electronically in one PDF file to Katrina Pipasts, Board President at [bmsboardpresident@brickton.org](mailto:bmsboardpresident@brickton.org) by Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

Applications should include:

- A cover letter explaining your interest in the position.
- A resume.
- A statement of educational philosophy.
- Three letters of recommendation.
- A list of five references. We will obtain permission from candidates before contacting references.
- Current salary and salary expectations.

## **Anticipated Search Calendar**

Applications Due:	March 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2020
Selection of Semi-finalists:	March 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2020
Semi-finalist Interviews:	April 2020
Finalist Visits:	May 2020
Appointment:	June 2020
Transition Period:	August 10-21, 2020
Official Start Date:	August 22, 2020

All applications will be reviewed confidentially and interviews will be conducted by the Board President and the Search Committee.

After a careful review of applicants, the Search Committee will select semi-finalists who will be interviewed by skype or in person. Finalists will be invited to Brickton Montessori School for a more comprehensive series of interviews. Full travel expenses for finalists will be paid for in-person interviews in Chicago, Illinois. Ideally, a final selection will be made no later than June 2020.

The Search Committee will keep all applicants informed of their status throughout the process.

***Brickton Montessori School does not discriminate in their educational programs, hiring, or activities on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sexual identity, age, religion, ability or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law.***