

POSITION STATEMENT

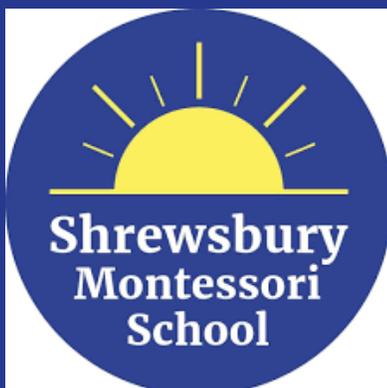
Shrewsbury Montessori School

SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

START DATE: JULY 1, 2026



OVERVIEW

Shrewsbury Montessori School (SMS) in Shrewsbury, MA (45 minutes west of Boston) is seeking a new Head of School to begin July 1, 2026. Founded in 1972, SMS is recognized as a leading independent school serving students from 15 months to 12 years and their families from throughout central Massachusetts. SMS's vibrant and diverse Montessori community provides students with an integrated learning journey that is developmentally appropriate and student-centered. The school's well-rounded Montessori academic program allows students to preserve their natural curiosity, inspiring them to become joyous learners and confident leaders.

Academically vibrant and operating on solid financial ground, SMS is looking for a talented leader to build on its core strengths and achievements. Formal training and experience in Montessori education is not required. However, the successful candidate will need to be able to appreciate and articulate the benefits of Montessori principles and practices for early childhood and elementary education—and will need to be passionate about building on SMS's strong foundation.

Throughout the 2025-26 academic year, SMS is being led by an interim Head of School. The next permanent Head will be expected to further the mission and continue the development of this wonderful school. Candidates will need to demonstrate that they possess the expertise, empathy, and energy to ensure that Shrewsbury Montessori School remains a special place for many years to come.



HISTORY, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES

Founded in 1972, Shrewsbury Montessori opened with 5 students. Over the past 50+ years, enrollment has expanded to as many as 200 students on two campuses that are in close proximity to each other. Originally a proprietary school, SMS now is incorporated as a non-profit independent school that is accredited by both the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) and the American Montessori Society (AMS).

The school's mission is "to prepare and foster the development of the whole child in a safe and nurturing environment, while sparking their natural curiosity and their innate love to learn. SMS aims to cultivate self-disciplined, self-confident, independent, and academically prepared global citizens who are cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically aware."



SMS's core values are grounded in the Montessori philosophy and guide the development of the school's community, programs, and culture. The school's five core values are:

- **Community:** Promoting cultural awareness and celebrating the diversity of students, families, and staff.
- **Joy of learning:** Providing engaged, purposeful learning opportunities that promote a love of lifelong learning.
- **Respect:** Cultivating self-respect, mutual respect, respect for others, and respect for the environment.
- **Peace education:** Nurturing each child's ability to become peaceful, compassionate citizens and responsible stewards of the planet
- **Independence and autonomy:** Encouraging and guiding children to do things for themselves.

LOCATION AND FACILITIES

Shrewsbury Montessori School is located on two campuses in Shrewsbury, MA, a short drive apart from one another. This central Massachusetts area is a rapidly growing corridor that includes several major universities and hospitals, many medical and technology start-ups, diverse art experiences, and a dynamic minor league baseball team! Relatively affordable housing and easy access to both mountains and ocean make this a very appealing location in which to lead and learn.

Classrooms at both the Prospect Street campus (serving toddlers and a Children's House) and the Oak Street campus (serving students in Pre-K to Grade 6) are bright, airy, and well-stocked with hands-on materials. Facilities include outdoor playgrounds, meeting and performance spaces, a library, and a wonderful garden. The school also rents time at a nearby gymnasium and swimming pool complex.

PROGRAM

SMS teaching methods follow the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori by giving each child freedom of choice and individual learning opportunities within the framework of a thoughtfully articulated curriculum. Each multi-age classroom has students within an approximately three-year age span. This allows younger children to learn by observing older students, and it gives older students an opportunity to develop leadership skills by serving as role models to their younger peers.

The school is organized into four program levels:

- Toddler classes for children aged 15 months to three years old
- Children's House classes for children three to six years old
- Lower Elementary classes for students in first grade through third grade
- Upper Elementary classes for students in fourth through sixth grade



Every child at SMS is allowed to work at their own level. Teachers observe each child and provide activities based upon their natural interests and abilities. In a Montessori classroom, children are surrounded by concrete materials that enhance and explain what they are studying. All items in the classroom are scaled to the child's size, including furniture, utensils, and the materials themselves. Children are encouraged to interact with their environment.

An important aspect of a Montessori classroom is long stretches of uninterrupted work time. During these periods, students are given the opportunity to work through various tasks and responsibilities at their own pace without interruption.

SMS teachers foster the development of the whole child, engaging children not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well. SMS students are friendly, polite, and respect one another. In the school's Montessori curriculum, teaching children these skills is called "Grace and Courtesy." Students practice simple lessons such as how to greet others, say please and thank you, and keep workspaces tidy.

At Shrewsbury Montessori School, students of all ages are given opportunities to perform tasks that promote care and respect of the environment. These opportunities are provided through Practical Life exercises in the Children's House program and daily jobs in the Elementary program.

Peace education and conflict resolution are integral parts of the curriculum at SMS. Everyday experiences in a supportive community allow children to express their needs, feelings, and emotions while also allowing them to develop sympathy, empathy, and appreciation for human differences.

For more detailed information about the program at SMS, go to:

<https://shrewsburymontessori.org/program/>

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Equity and Inclusion

SMS cultivates and supports an inclusive community that honors and celebrates differences. The school community incorporates an increasingly diverse student body and strives to be welcoming and supportive to all community members.

Faculty and Staff

The SMS teaching faculty is comprised of dedicated professionals who model a strong work ethic and collaboration while delivering a challenging curriculum to students. All SMS lead teachers hold Montessori credentials, which include a rigorous training program and a supervised year-long internship in addition to their academic degree.

Administration

The Head of School works with a senior leadership team that includes a Business Manager, Director of Admissions, Director of Development and Communications, Director of Technology, and an Early Education Campus Director. In addition, there are designated

faculty members who serve as Children's House Coordinator, Lower Elementary Coordinator, and Upper Elementary Coordinator.

Families

At SMS, there is a shared belief that authentic home-and-school partnerships are the surest path to maximizing each child's potential. Furthermore, parents actively support the faculty and staff through coordinating volunteer opportunities, planning events for the school community, and participating in the Annual Fund.

Board of Trustees

The Board's responsibility is to ensure the long-term success of SMS in delivering a high-quality and accessible Montessori education. Through mission-focused strategic planning and high-level policy setting, the Board helps to set the tone and culture of the school. Financial management oversight, fundraising, ensuring that the school has adequate physical resources, and the hiring, support, and evaluation of the Head of School are core responsibilities.



STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

SMS is a school with many strengths. Since its founding, the school has thrived as a dynamic and nurturing community, staying true to its mission and core values. Today, SMS is a school that benefits from:

- A strong and dedicated faculty and staff
- Two appealing campuses that fully support its academic programs
- Sound financial management
- Adherence to clear Montessori principles and practices
- An exceptionally caring and supportive school community

The next Head of School will have the opportunity to build upon a solid foundation. Of particular importance, as SMS looks to the future, there is an overriding desire to preserve and maintain a school culture based on warmth, caring, trust, and support.

Key strategic challenges and opportunities that the next Head will work with the Board of Trustees to address are the following:

- **Communication:** Like most schools, SMS strives to provide avenues for input and to keep faculty and parents well-informed about school events, priorities, and decisions. While there is wide acknowledgment that the school has not had effective mechanisms in place to accomplish this, the interim Head is making good progress on moving towards greater transparency and more timely communication both within the school and between the school and its parent community.
- **Enrollment management:** While SMS has long been a school of choice in central Massachusetts, its current enrollment of 135 students is well below the desired level.
- **Faculty recruitment/retention:** In an increasingly competitive market, the next Head will need to work to ensure that SMS can attract and retain top talent, including an examination of recruitment strategies, salaries and benefits, attrition, and opportunities for teachers to receive feedback and support for their ongoing professional growth and development.
- **Montessori focus:** SMS is a school that takes its Montessori focus seriously and therefore requires ongoing vigilance in ensuring that both program and operational decisions and choices continue to be guided by Montessori principles and practices.



There is a need for more directed and effective marketing with clearer messaging about the benefits of a Montessori and independent school education for young children. The next Head will need to develop and implement a multi-year plan for rebuilding enrollment, including an examination of marketing, attrition, pricing, school hours, financial aid, and further program development.

- **Governance:** As a still relatively young independent school, there is a need for ongoing education within the SMS community about what the Board of Trustees does and does not do. In addition, the new Head is likely going to need to work in partnership with the Board to increase an emphasis on fundraising in support of SMS's continuing development, while not abandoning the school's egalitarian values.
- **Two campuses/One school:** Like other schools that function on multiple sites, SMS needs to ensure that there are consistent policies and intentional opportunities for connection between students, faculty, and parents at Prospect Street and Oak Street. For the Head of School, this includes being present on a predictable basis at each campus and creating contexts for reinforcing the message that SMS is one school serving Toddlers through Grade 6.



THE POSITION

The next permanent Head of Shrewsbury Montessori School will have the opportunity to lead a healthy and thriving independent school to a next level of educational excellence. The Head of School at SMS oversees ongoing operations, hires and supports its employees, and manages its annual budget.

The next Head's initial annual base salary will be commensurate with the compensation offered by similar central Massachusetts elementary independent schools.

The successful candidate will be a mission and values-driven leader who embodies and demonstrates many of the following skills, qualities, characteristics, and experiences:

- Embodies SMS's core values of grace and courtesy within a caring and supportive school community
- Maintains a growth mindset, valuing feedback and ongoing improvement for both self and others
- Excellent communicator, who listens to understand and builds strong connections both within and outside the school community
- Demonstrates strong organization and time management skills
- Demonstrates knowledge and conviction around the principles and practices of Montessori education
- Brings a passion for early childhood and elementary education, grounded in prior teaching experience and a profound respect for faculty and their work

- Embraces the joys of being an engaged presence on campus—warm, empathetic, approachable, and available to students, faculty, staff, and parents
- Demonstrates a strong understanding of independent school governance and the ability to work effectively with the Board to implement the school's mission
- Maintains calm under pressure, skillfully navigating difficult conversations and demonstrating the ability to inspire confidence in a crisis
- Prioritizes accountability, ensures consistent follow-through, and delegates strategically to empower and maximize the strengths of others
- Maintains a collaborative nature and flexible attitude, encouraging input in decision-making
- Leads with compassion, integrity, humility, resilience, and humor



APPLICATION PROCESS

Shrewsbury Montessori School has retained Resource Group 175 (RG175) to support the search for its next Head of School. To apply, interested candidates should prepare a cover letter, a current resume, and a personal statement. Candidates are requested to submit these materials online at: <https://rg175.com/candidate/signup>.

For an initial confidential inquiry or to nominate a potential candidate for this exciting leadership position, please contact RG175 consultant Jerry Katz jkatz@rg175.com.

Application Deadline: **November 30, 2025**

Start Date: **July 1, 2026**