

The Serra Preschool President

The Board seeks a business or education professional committed to helping each child develop social, emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual life skills.

The President will: manage the school's infrastructure, personnel and operations; increase enrollment to capacity; and expand programmatically and geographically.

SERRA PRESCHOOL BACKGROUND

Opened in 2001 in the private home of Bill and Marjorie Campbell, The Serra Preschool is today located in San Francisco's historic Presidio within walking distance of the Palace of Fine Arts and the Walt Disney Family Museum. The school has an annual enrollment of 50 (and a capacity of 95), budget of \$1,300,000, a very strong balance sheet, 10 teaching and administrative staff, and 8 board members. The school has graduated 1,200 students to date.

The Founding Education Director is Marybeth Cody, who is expected to continue in that role for about 3 years. Marybeth and her team are the educational heart of the operation, and their approach is based in a combination of hands-on/minds-on play-based pedagogical approaches developed at Stanford University, and a Roman Catholic tradition of values-based education that recognizes God and embraces traditions associated with worshipful practice. The Serra community is comprised of families of different faiths but common values, and welcomes all.

Individualized attention is the hallmark of The Serra School's approach, and programs are continually improved based upon each child's needs and the latest research into early childhood development. Six of the eight teaching staff have been with the school for over ten years, four since the school's founding. Preschools often specialize in certain pedagogies that are effective for the average child, but at Serra there is no such thing as an "average" child and programs are developed by this stable, experienced team with special attention to the needs and sensibilities of each child. The Serra Preschool specializes in combining techniques and advancing learning approaches that prove to be particularly effective for that particular student. What all students have in common is an experiential learning approach with a high degree of focused interaction between each child, their peers, and their adult teachers.

The Serra Preschool operates on a financially solid basis with strong reserves, enjoys the sustained support of engaged parents, and has had a surplus since its founding. The school is well positioned to continue operating at its current level, and has the means to expand programmatically and geographically in the San Francisco Bay Area.

POSITION BASIC FUNCTION

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the President has responsibility for:

- Operations and programs, including responsibility for all final staff, staffing and consultant hiring/retention decisions;
- Day-to-day management of finances, facilities and partnerships; student and parent recruiting; optimizing earned and contributed revenue streams; and all branding, communications and marketing;
- Planning and development of proof of concept expansion projects to test various options for programmatic and geographic expansion. Such planning would include financial estimates of one-time and ongoing operating costs, infrastructure changes required to

scale the organization, teacher training according to established Serra standards, market research to establish demand, facilities planning, and licensing and oversight.

- Project implementation of expansion initiatives, with execution starting January 2024 or earlier.

The Founding Education Director of the school reports to the President, however this role operates distinctly as regards curricular content, the child's preschool experience, and interactions with parents. The two leaders are envisioned as collaborators in the truest sense. The Founding Education Director orchestrates enriching experiences for children in close consultation with their parents, and selects, counsels, trains and evaluates teachers. Although the Founding Education Director has a considerable measure of autonomy, decisions on curriculum (particularly documentation of approaches that Serra can deploy at new locations), teacher hiring, program or geographic expansion, and other educational decisions that impact finances, must also be agreed and coordinated with the President.

The Serra Preschool must prepare for the retirement of the Founding Education Director in three years, must work with her and the Board to recruit a successor, and must develop training programs for teachers that are not dependent on the presence of the Founding Education Director's steady guiding hand. This is also needed to safeguard the quality of The Serra Experience as the organization expands its services, programs or geographic reach. Over the next three years, and with the active participation of the Founding Education Director and teaching staff, the President will orchestrate creation of a "Serra Preschool Teacher Training Program." This teacher training curriculum will eventually be executed without the personal involvement of the Founding Education Director.

The President ensures that the organization is financially, operationally and educationally strong and scalable; and ensures that by January 2024 The Serra School begins a program of expansion to other San Francisco Bay Area locations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

PRIORITIES IN THE FIRST 6 MONTHS:

- Quickly get to know The Serra Preschool – its people, culture and constituents; funding and finances; facilities and operations; educational approaches and programs;
- Establish strong working relationships with the Board, the Founding Education Director, staff, partners, funders and others in the field; strengthen and sustain a culture of transparency, collaboration, communication, teamwork and integrity;
- Take on day-to-day, hands-on management of day-to-day facilities, administration and processes related to the functioning of the school, with particular emphasis initially on increasing enrollment and revenue; institute best practices and streamline back-office operations functions to position the school for expansion;
- Develop within the first 90 days a marketing plan for Serra, gain Board approval, and begin implementation of the plan.

MARKETING, STUDENT RECRUITING, REVENUE OPTIMIZATION

- Function as the organization's point person for recruiting parents and their children to The Serra Preschool; maintain, promote and provide visibility for The Serra Preschool by

serving as a credible, articulate and effective spokesperson, in person and in writing; reinforce and build positive understanding of and reputation for the organization;

- Drive earned income through tuition & fees, in-kind contributions and financial donations through solicitations; view all Board, staff, programs through a resource development lens; personally develop fundraising relationships and drive solicitations;
- Understand current, and research prospective, constituents able to fund The Serra Preschool at the Presidio location and in other regions around San Francisco Bay; create strategies and target new locations for Serra Preschool operating units; recruit parents and students for targeted new Serra Preschool locations.

FINANCE, OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES:

- Review, streamline, simplify and make transparent The Serra Preschool's financial apparatus; review chart of accounts, current accounting systems and control procedures, audit trails, financial documentation and workflows with particular emphasis on strong financial controls; assure that financial infrastructure is lean and cost-efficient, while allowing flexibility for scaling as new schools are opened throughout the San Francisco Bay Area;
- Ensure that actual expenditures are in alignment with budget plans; review all contracts, insurance, vendor and subcontractor relationships to understand them and identify cost savings; assure that payroll is accurate and processed in a timely way; forecast and manage cash flow;
- Secure the organization's buildings and grounds in different locations, assuring that all property remains on site, and that locations are safe for all children and users throughout the day and night;
- Ensure that the organization's financial systems and operating infrastructure are scalable and sufficiently robust as organization expands.

BOARD RELATIONS

- Review Board: by-laws and governance policies, recruiting, give/get standards, term limits, and oversight responsibilities (finance, fundraising, curriculum, and personnel) and accountability; work with the Board to implement agreed changes;
- Keep the Board updated on Serra operations; with the Chair, coordinate the efforts of various committees and encourage Board members to be active in oversight and scaling activities, including identifying programmatic and geographic expansion opportunities;
- Help identify and recruit new Governance Board members, whose talents, commitment, and fundraising abilities are congruent with the needs and mission of The Serra Preschool, and will help in the organization's expansion efforts; recruit Local School Advisory Boards consisting of parents and other local community members who are physically proximate to new school locations.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The ideal candidate should have the following experience and qualifications:

- Proven managerial, problem-solving and planning capabilities with significant financial, administrative, human resources, and day-to-day operating responsibility with a high-

touch education or services business or nonprofit organization; a person focused on expansion and continually improved levels of service to new constituents;

- A mature level of judgment and decision-making in a forward-leaning customer service environment; experience working with children and parents is a distinct advantage, as is familiarity with safety, certification, staff hiring, curricular development and other operating details associated with running a preschool, school or similar environment;
- Formulates and expresses ideas concisely, clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; the ability to guide and counsel colleagues, partners, employees and others; exercises tact, skill and diplomacy; the ability to be an ambassador and an effective spokesperson for The Serra Preschool;
- A high energy level with a focus on improving and expanding services and the number of children with access to those services; attention to detail, good humor and fortitude in managing relationships with various parties, especially with parents;
- Demonstrated ability to forge mutually-respectful and effective working relationships with a diverse group of personalities in a collegial and cooperative manner, including staff and Board members, parents, volunteers, prospective supporters, auditors, accrediting orgs, vendors, etc;
- A team builder and mentor with outstanding human qualities; one who is straightforward, flexible, shares information easily, listens as well as gives advice, and respects the abilities of others; someone who projects trustworthiness, integrity, and solidity and guides others in a similar vein;
- Results-oriented, adept at seeing the big-picture, planning, prioritizing, organizing, and following through; a hard worker with a high energy level; emotionally mature with a sense of humor and an ability to maintain balance and perspective while maintaining a focus on continual improvements to and expansion of services.

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