



The Montessori School of Raleigh

Chief Advancement Officer

Raleigh, NC



The Montessori School *of* Raleigh
a Montessori and IB World School

Background

Approaching its 50th anniversary in the 2024–2025 school year, The Montessori School of Raleigh (MSR) is a heartwarming and relational school. Steeped in the Montessori tradition, each child is treated as a capable individual and encouraged to reach for the heights of plausible independence at every age and stage. Similarly, students' own interests and inclinations are fostered as they reach for the work that is most engaging for them in the



moment. Teachers serve as guides and facilitators throughout the school while they foster learning, care for each other and the wider community, and a love of the outdoors. Outsiders and new parents consistently express amazement at seeing what MSR children are capable of. When was the last time you saw a room full of three to five-year-olds quietly doing their enriching work involving measurements, skip counting, reading, and/or writing? What you *won't* find at MSR are chaos and raised voices admonishing children. In its place, you may find work purposefully left out (that a child is still progressing through and will come back to), collaborative projects, and so many students finding their voices and learning how to communicate across differences. There are no artificial limits placed on the learning possibilities for students at MSR.

Despite its almost 50-year history, MSR is in a lot of ways still very much like a start-up. In the four years that Head of School Monica Rodriguez has led MSR, their enrollment has increased by 62%, the percentage for parent giving is up, and they've added the infant program. The start-up moniker seems overstated until you understand that they've had frequent turnover in their Heads of School and Board Chairs in that window and that their high school hasn't even been open a decade. Ready for a new chapter, MSR is striving for stability and security in both its financial footprint and in its leadership. MSR is ready for a visionary, experienced, and dedicated Chief Advancement Officer.

The Montessori School of Raleigh at a Glance

Mission

The Montessori School of Raleigh is the Research Triangle's modern embodiment and mindful practice of the time-proven Montessori philosophy, developing agile thinkers, poised communicators, and gracious collaborators—engineers of authentic and fulfilling lives.

Facts and Figures

Founded: 1974

2023-24 School-wide Enrollment: 434

Infant-Kindergarten: 243

Grades 1-6: 144

Grades 7-8: 25

High School: 40

Students self-identifying as students of color:
37%

Employees: 94

Average tenure of faculty: 4 years

Location: Infants through Grade 6 on the Lead Mine Raleigh campus, and Grades 7-12 on the 40-acre Brier Creek Durham campus

Acreage: 49.5 acres

Indebtedness: \$5 million

Operating Budget: \$10.1 million

Full-Day Tuition: \$20,525 - \$25,695

Financial Aid: \$400,000 to 14% of students

Total Funds Raised, 2022-23: \$225,000

Parent Participation in Annual Giving: 40%

Accreditation: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the American Montessori Society, and the Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation

Membership: American Montessori Society (AMS), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), North Carolina Association of Independent Schools (NCAIS)

On the Web: <https://www.msr.org/>



The Position: Chief Advancement Officer

Reporting to Head of School Monica Rodriguez and serving as a member of the Senior Team, the Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) leads the Advancement team in developing effective strategies to work toward raising sufficient funds to meet the specific goal of achieving the annual operating budget, as well as more forward-looking goals such as capital campaigns that raise money for faculty attraction and retention, an endowment, financial aid, and/or to support future building or upgrading endeavors. In addition to the CAO, the seven-member team includes the Director of Annual Fund, Director of Community Engagement, Director of Marketing and Communications, Manager of Marketing and Communications, Director of Admissions and Associate Director of Admissions.

MSR's CAO provides the leadership and coordination of the school's philanthropic activities to support the financial goals, both annually and long-term, for the continued success of the school. Equally important is the cultivation of support—relationships and financial—from school leadership, Board members, faculty, and various constituents including parents, alumni, and past parents.



Key Responsibilities

Advancement Direction and Fundraising

- Responsible for the comprehensive oversight, planning, implementation, management, and strategy for fundraising, marketing, communications, admissions, donor relations, and community engagement for MSR.
- Works with the Head of School (HOS) to develop a robust donor pipeline to support the school's long-term fundraising goals and vision.
- Develops and implements strategies to deepen and diversify MSR's funding base and attract new major individual donors.
- Generates interest and support for MSR, including leveraging parent network to support and celebrate MSR.

- Actively participates in leadership gift solicitations; manages a portfolio of prospective individual donors and cultivates, stewards, and deepens relationships with select existing major donors.
- Manages the school's annual fund and works closely with the HOS to achieve the school's overall annual revenue goals.
- Fosters a 'culture of philanthropy' with the parent network.
- Strengthens the school's planned giving program.
- Analyzes and bolsters the school's major gift program via the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of prospects and donors.
- In partnership with the Director of Marketing and Communications, generates effective fundraising-related print and digital communications, including, but not limited to funder updates, donor acknowledgments, and consistent cultivation of relationships.

Event Planning and Community Participation

- Designs, plans, and implements a MSR Gala in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the school.
- Sets the stage for an annually occurring fundraising event, inviting and coordinating parent participation and leadership.
- Coordinates with other Leadership Team and Board Members to design and host targeted community and parent cultivation events.
- Partners with the Director of Admissions and the Director of Marketing and Communications to create MSR excitement-building events strategically throughout Raleigh/Durham.
- Represents the school at community events, professional associations, and conferences to raise the school's profile.
- Publicly represents the school in a positive and proactive way, collaborating with alumni, parents, other local institutions, and neighbors.



Leadership and management

- Drives advocacy and awareness of the school's mission and needs.
- Fosters a culture of collaboration and teamwork with the advancement team.
- Works closely with Chief Financial Officer in developing financial strategy.
- Works closely with the Board of Trustees and sits on the Development Committee of Trustees.
- Serves as a trusted advisor to the HOS.
- Manages, cultivates, and supports parent volunteer networks.
- Serves on the school's Leadership Team and leads or participates in several other committees.
- Produces Board reports and presentations.
- Is an advocate for the school's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) work and uses DEIB best practices when planning and implementing fundraising and community events.
- Manages Advancement Office budget.
- Oversees data management policies for the Advancement Office, including privacy, accuracy, reports, best practices, gift entry, reconciliation, surveys, paperwork, etc.
- Works collegially within a diverse community, communicates effectively with diverse populations, and participates in professional development as related to DEIB work.
- Helps out where needed to interact with families and students.



Desired Qualifications and Qualities

Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree plus at least seven years of leadership experience as a fundraising and development professional, preferably in independent schools.
- Proven track record for building a culture of philanthropy, success with fundraising, and success with a capital campaign.
- Proven experience with grant writing and securing funding from a variety of sources (foundations, corporations, alumni, etc.).
- Knowledge of or deep respect for Montessori philosophy.
- Experience working collaboratively and harmoniously with a leadership team, fostering an environment of open communication, trust, and shared goals.
- Experience with event planning, from small intimate coffees to large galas.
- Deep grounding in all aspects of development work, from annual giving to major gifts, prospect research to stewardship, constituent events to advancement services.
- Ability to learn, understand, and convey priorities to donors and the community.
- A motivational communicator, both written and verbal, who is effective in one-on-one and group settings as well as equally engaging with internal and external audiences.
- Ability to cultivate and build strong and organic relationships with both the school and greater Raleigh/Durham community.
- Demonstrated experience in DEIB principles with a focus on aligning philanthropic practices with equity and inclusion and the ability to manage and inspire a diverse group of family volunteers.
- Comfortable using data as part of decision-making.



Personal Characteristics

- Thrives on building relationships with parents, faculty, and the community at large.
- Has tact, sensitivity, and mature judgment; can maintain privacy, confidentiality, and discretion.
- Technically savvy and possesses a can-do spirit; an excellent writer and storyteller.
- Committed to and demonstrates a growth mindset.
- Team-oriented and collaborative; able to bring people and ideas together to solve problems and advance initiatives.
- A strong work ethic, including the ability to work efficiently under pressure; meet deadlines; demonstrate strategic thinking and good decision-making; and maintain and model high personal, ethical, and professional standards.
- Highly organized and detail-oriented.
- Has excellent listening skills and the ability to work with constituents possessing diverse opinions.
- Is even-keeled and highly emotionally intelligent with a joyful spirit; empathetic.



Key Competencies

- **Big Picture Thinking:** Taking a broad view when approaching issues, using a global lens.
- **Stakeholder Focus:** Building strong stakeholder relationships and delivering targeted solutions.
- **Financial Acumen:** Interpreting and applying understanding of key financial indicators to make better decisions.
- **Strategic Mindset:** Seeing ahead to future possibilities and translating them into breakthrough strategies.
- **Interpersonal Savvy:** Relating openly and comfortably with diverse groups of people.
- **Instills Trust:** Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.

Benefits and Compensation

The anticipated salary range for this position is \$120–\$150K. MSR offers a comprehensive benefits package including medical, dental, and vision insurance. The school also has a 403b retirement plan.

Application Requirements and Search Process

DRG is conducting this search on behalf of MSR. Interested candidates should submit, as soon as possible, materials including the following:

- A cover letter indicating why they are particularly interested in and qualified for the position.
- A current resume.
- Example of a campaign or other documented fundraising strategy or success.
- A list of references (references will not be contacted until the finalist stage of the search).

Application Status: Accepting Applications

Start date: July 1, 2024 or sooner

This position description is based upon material provided by The Montessori School of Raleigh, an equal opportunity employer welcoming applicants of any race, color, religion, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, and any other legally protected status.

To apply for this position, please click [HERE](#).

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