

## 1.5 Staffing

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14 Del. C. § 512(6)

### Staff Structure [14 Del. C. § 512(6)]

1. Provide, as Attachment 9, organizational charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure in Year 1 and at full expansion. **(Note!** The organizational charts will be compared against the budget figures supplied elsewhere. The provided organizational charts and budget must align.) The organizational charts and accompanying descriptions should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the Board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/educator councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organizational charts and accompanying notes or roster should identify the following:
  - a. Year 1 positions with position descriptions, including those for administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;
  - b. The number of classroom educators, Paraprofessionals, any specialty educators, and contracted professional services, such as Speech Therapists, Physical Therapists, etc.;
  - c. Operational and support staff;  
The reporting structure for the proposed school; and
  - d. The educator-student ratio, as well as the ratio of adults to students for the school.

**(Note!** The School Nurse must hold a valid standard certificate as a School Nurse, a bachelor's degree in Nursing, and a current Registered School Nurse license pursuant to 14 DE Admin Code § 1582.)

See Attachment 9 - Job Descriptions  
Attachment 9A – Organizational Charts

2. If the school is part of a network of schools and/or would contract with a Charter Management Company or other education management provider, clearly show the network/provider's role in the organizational structure of the school. Explain how the relationship between the Board and the school administration will be managed.

Not applicable - SMS will not be contracting with a charter management company.

### Staffing Plans, Management, and Evaluation [14 Del. C. § 512(6)]

1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed charter school and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts.

All administrators, teachers, assistant teachers, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, custodial and maintenance employees and drivers will be state employees, subject to all employee rules and regulations, and will be receive opportunities for benefit and retirement packages as such.

Upon hire, all employees will sign an employment agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to outline the employee/employer relationship, identify the compensation and benefits offered to the employee, and detail the duties to be performed by the employee. New employee orientation will include an explanation of the school’s core values, vision, and mission. In addition, each new employee will be given an overview of the benefits program and will complete all necessary paperwork prior to employment.

All employment at SMS will be “at will.” This means that both employees and the school have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without advance notice (though all parties may request and should try to give thirty days’ notice); and, with or without cause. However, SMS will not discharge employees for exercising their right to vote or their political affiliation; for answering the call for military service or jury duty; for exercising their right of association; for filing a worker’s compensation claim; or for receiving an order for wage garnishment.

- 2. Outline the proposed school’s salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system. Explain the school’s strategy for retaining high-performing educators.**

**Table of Salary Ranges:**

<b>Employees</b>	<b>Salary Range</b>	
Classroom Teachers	\$38,000	\$53,000
Special Education Teachers	\$38,000	\$53,000
Counselors	\$38,000	\$53,000
School Leader	\$89,000	\$110,000
Education Director	\$65,000	\$82,400
Nurse	\$38,000	\$50,000
Clerical	\$25,000	\$40,000
Custodian	\$25,000	\$36,255
Business Manager – Part time or contacted services	\$30,000	\$35,000

**Full time employees working 30+ hours per week will receive the following benefits:**

Maternity Leave	Bereavement Leave	Jury Duty relief
Leave of Absence Provisions	Family and medical Leave Act	Pension

Tuition loan for Montessori Training	Blood Bank Membership	Workman's Compensation
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The Montessori environment is one that creates a supportive, need satisfying climate for all. When teachers work in an engaging, professional and respectful environment they want to stay. We anticipate high retention rates based on job satisfaction and competitive salaries.

- 3. Describe the plan and timeline for recruiting and selecting the teaching staff and other educators/professional staff. Describe the school's plan for meeting the educator certification requirements of the Delaware Charter Law, 14 Del. C. § 507, which includes ensuring that non-certified educators are participating in a Delaware approved alternative certification program. Describe any pre-service training that prepares new educators while providing an additional staff screening period for the School Leadership Team.**

The School Leader and the Sussex Montessori School Board will work together in recruiting and hiring the teachers and school support staff; as well as defining responsibilities, determining compensation for all school employees within the constraints of the school budget, and fulfilling the instructional design. The school leader will have the final authority to hire teachers and other instructional staff. The school leader will report on personnel issues and positions being posted or filled at the monthly board meeting.

The current timeline indicates that the Head of School will be hired by September 1, 2018. Posting for teacher and teacher assistant positions will be done between January and May 2019. Offers will be completed for teaching faculty by May of 2019 and the Education Director will be hired by June 2019. See Start Up Plan for additional details.

Teachers at Sussex Montessori School will need to be both DE State certified and have their Montessori Certification. While every effort will be made to recruit Montessori teachers for the first operating year, the board knows that many teachers will be just beginning their training in the summer prior to the school opening.

As a state wide advocacy organization, Montessori Works Incorporated will aid the school's recruitment efforts in the planning year by conducting events to help teachers understand what it means to teach in a Montessori School and to provide details about Montessori teacher preparation.

Sussex Montessori will conduct an aggressive recruitment campaign through local and national advertising for all open positions. Interested candidates will be screened and participate in a rigorous interview process based on national criteria around recruitment and selection. The process for hiring the school leader, teachers, and other school staff will include:

- recruitment and screening; review of credentials, background, experience, and references;
- sample lesson (if applicable); writing sample; interviews with the school leader and/or Board;

In addition, Montessori Works Incorporated is establishing a teacher certification pipeline for teachers interested in gaining a certificate in Montessori pedagogy. Currently, Montessori Works has successfully facilitated a partnership between the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Delaware and the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector. It is envisioned that a consortium of charters and local districts will join together to send teachers who have been hired to work in a Montessori School to the program. The National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector will provide the curriculum, assist in training future local leaders to develop a locally sustainable program, and support the national accreditation with MACTE. This program is designed specifically to support teachers in public Montessori Schools including additional courses in literacy, family relationships, and children of poverty. The program includes face to face course work, online course work, and in school coaching. The program will seek Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) accreditation. MACTE is recognized as one of the two nationally recognized accrediting agencies for teacher preparation.

If non-certified state teachers are hired on emergency certification, it will be necessary for them to successfully pass the PRAXIS I and II and to possess a nationally accredited degree in their core area of instruction. Alternatively, uncertified teachers may participate in a Delaware-approved alternative route to certification program to earn their teaching certificate. SMS will not exceed the state maximum for uncertified teachers. All teachers will be required to maintain compliance with state and Federal certification guidelines.

#### **4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including the school's process for conducting criminal background checks.**

The process for hiring the school leader, teachers, and other school staff will include

- recruitment and screening;
- review of credentials, background, experience, and references;
- sample lesson (if applicable);
- writing sample;
- interviews with the school leader and/or Board;
- sample lessons;
- and recommendations and contract approvals by the Board.

The tasks and timeline for hiring may be found in Appendix D-1. As part of the pre-employment process, all employees and Board members will be required to complete a criminal background check (CBC) through the Delaware State Police. In cases where termination is necessary to ensure a safe and/or productive learning environment for the students, the following will guide the termination process:

- The school leader, in consultation with the Operating Board chair, will make the recommendation to the Board for termination of an employee.
- The employee may appeal this decision to the Board by initially informing the Board Chair of the intent to appeal in writing.
- The employee will meet with the Board and the school leader.
- A final decision will be rendered by the Board.
- Employees may also be dismissed through the DPAS II process explained in #5 below.

The complete procedures for hiring and dismissal may be found in the Employee Handbook which is included as Appendix D-2.

**5. Describe how the School Leadership Team will use the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) as required by Delaware Code and regulations or propose an alternative system. Also, explain how the school will use educator evaluation processes to provide support for educators and ultimately make decisions about retention, promotion, and advancement.**

SMS's Head of School and Education Director will complete the online DPAS II Evaluator Training, accessible via the Professional Development Management System (PDMS) during the school's planning year, as required for all new administrators in Delaware public schools. The Head of School will also attend the recommended three-day, in-person DPAS II Training for New Administrators, offered in the fall of the planning year. SMS teachers who need to will complete the online DPAS II Teacher Training or DPAS II Specialist Training blackboard course available through PDMS prior to their first evaluations.

The Head of School will ensure that all observations and related materials are entered into the Evaluation Reporting System (ERS) as required by the State. To ensure fidelity to the DPAS II evaluation system the Board will monitor the progress of the school leader toward teacher evaluation timelines.

The DPAS II process will provide the backbone for feedback on teacher practice and related responsibilities in the building. Teachers who have summative ratings of 'Effective' or 'Highly Effective' may be considered for advancements, promotions, and extra responsibilities within the building. Teachers who have summative ratings of 'Needs Improvement' or 'Ineffective' will be provided with written expectations and/or improvement plans targeted at enhancing their performance.

**6. Explain how the school will handle unsatisfactory educator performance, as well as educator changes and turnover.**

Ultimately, teachers who do not improve and continue to exhibit patterns of ineffective teaching may be subject to dismissal.

Employees with unacceptable job performance will be notified of the need for improved

performance in written and verbal communication, and will be provided with any needed professional development and support to make improvements. In the most extreme cases (e.g., employee actions or words that harm or threaten to endanger students' well-being and behavior that creates an irrevocable breach of trust), employees may be terminated immediately.

Should a teaching vacancy arise in the middle of the year, it will be widely advertised and filled with urgency. The network of Montessori teachers known to Montessori Works, First State Montessori and others will be targeted for the advertisement of these positions.

**7. Explain how and when the Board will evaluate the Principal/School Leader. What evaluation tool will be used? What key performance criteria will be examined? How will student academic growth be factored into the Principal/School Leader's evaluation?**

The Executive Board will work with the Board President to evaluate the school leader. There will be an annual review using the DPAS II for Principals. The Board Chair will attend the state DPAS II training for evaluators of administrators. Goals will be established and monitored annually. Particular attention will be given to the mission specific goal of providing a Montessori education at SMS and how the school leader supports that goal. The NCMPS rubric of Essential Elements will be used as a part of this evaluation. Because the principal is ultimately responsible for student learning in the school, the evaluation will also include a review of the state assessment scores and student progress.

If the school leader does not meet performance expectations, he or she will be notified of the need for improved performance in written and verbal communication by the Board President. The Board President will meet with the school leader to create an improvement plan, and to develop a coaching schedule with a leadership coach for the school. If the improvement in leadership capacity is not realized within the developed timeframe, the Board President, with consultation of the Board, will make the decision to terminate the school leader. Employment decisions related to the school leader are at the sole discretion of the Board. In the most extreme cases described above, where students may be put in harm's way by the continuation of the school leader's employment; he or she will be terminated immediately.

In the event that the school leader is terminated, the most senior academic lead will take over the duties of the school leader, until such time as the Board President and Personnel Committee recruit, interview and replace the school leader.

**8. What mechanisms or options will the Board leverage to address unsatisfactory leadership performance, should it occur, as well as turnover? What cut points within established metrics might trigger different courses of action in regards to the oversight of the Principal/School Leader?**

While state assessment scores alone will not be a criterion for discipline or termination of the school leader, under performance of the school year over year may necessitate a constructive

re-evaluation of the school leader's ability to guide the school and a corrective plan should be scheduled for the subsequent academic year. If improvement does not occur, the Board will consider termination based on the evaluation.

Ratings of ineffective (1) or needs improvement (2) in any category would suggest the need for coaching or an improvement plan. See above for improvement plan management and related employment decisions.

A mismanagement of school resources resulting in jeopardizing the school's finances and operational metrics will result in a hearing and immediate dismissal if appropriate.

### **Professional Development** [14 Del. C. § 512(6)]

- 1. Describe the professional development plan, including standards and opportunities that will be offered to the staff. Identify who will be responsible for developing, leading, and evaluating professional development at the school. This description should explain how professional development for the faculty will support the educational program and build capacity to improve student achievement. The plan must include the following:**

In their chapter focusing on *High-Quality Research-Based Professional Development*, Dagen and Bean (2014) emphasize that the research demonstrates that basic components such as a focus on content, active learning, duration and ongoing support are related to professional learning that impacts student learning. These are fairly standard themes across the research and clearly need to be considered by SMS leadership as they seek to impact the daily experience of students through the adults that work with them. However, SMS will also address this statement from Dagen "We propose a third wave, a recognition of the importance of the culture within which teachers work and the need for distributed leadership that helps teachers focus on the goal of improving student learning" as the leaders consider the ideal professional learning community to impact student learning in a Montessori School.

- a. A schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what the focus will be during this induction period and how educators will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods;**

#### Montessori Training – Teachers who are not already Montessori prepared

Each of the lead teachers in the school will be required to be Montessori certified. As described above, Montessori Works has gained approval for a Montessori teacher training program in partnership with the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector and the University of Delaware, College of Education and Human Development. The NCMPS program is successfully in use in Memphis, TN, Washington, DC, and Detroit, MI. This program will involve teachers who do not already have their Montessori training to attend Montessori Training on the following schedule:

Summer 2019

- 5 weeks of training on Montessori materials and curriculum prior to the school opening. This training will prepare teachers for the first year in the classroom.

School year 2019-2020

- Onsite weekly coaching provided through the training program.
- Two weekend seminars

Summer 2020

- 5 weeks of training on Montessori materials and curriculum preparing teachers for the second year in the classroom.

School year 2020-21

- Onsite weekly coaching provided through the training program.
- Two weekend seminars

Summer 2020

Final projects and portfolios completed

Five weeks summer 2019, School year 2019, and Summer 2020 - All Staff will participate in the “surround courses” provided by Montessori Works and developed by the NCMPS training program designed to better prepare teachers for work in a public Montessori setting. This includes a study of neurodevelopment, trauma, family engagement, special education in the Montessori classroom, literacy and English Language Learning. This series of 15 job embedded modules is focused on delivering a fully implemented Montessori program to high needs children.

August 26-29, 2019 – All staff will participate in a four-day Responsive Classroom I workshop. In addition, SMS teachers will review the discipline policy and be trained on appropriate use of seclusion and physical restraint per Title 14.

- b. The expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and an explanation of how the school’s calendar, daily schedule, and staffing plan will be structured to accommodate this plan. Specify when educators will have time for common planning or collaboration and how such time will typically be used;**

During the school year, there are strategically placed Professional Development Days to allow teachers to reflect on and refine implementation of Responsive Classroom and Montessori methods.

Dates	PD Activity	Description of PD
Summer 2019 5 weeks	Montessori Teacher Preparation	It is expected that teachers who do not have Montessori certification will attend the University of Delaware program being developed in

		partnership with the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector.
July 15-18, 2019	Developing Curriculum	Teachers will begin the job embedded Montessori modules described above and begin planning for curriculum units to be taught in 2019-20
August 26-29, 2019	Responsive Classroom training	RC week long training to take place during these four full days. Teachers will develop implementation plans
October 15, 2019	Responsive Classroom/ or continued work with UD Montessori Teacher Preparation courses	Teachers will either participate in “wrap around courses” through the UD Montessori Teacher Preparation Residency program or in further RC training.
November 25-26, 2019	Student led conferences	Teachers will also have time to review assessment data and plan for upcoming units
February 14, 2020	Responsive Classroom/ or continued work with UD Montessori Teacher Preparation courses	Teachers will either participate in “wrap around courses” through the UD Montessori Teacher Preparation Residency program or in further RC training.
May 22, 2020	Reflection/ Planning forward	Review of the year, identification of challenges and planning for next year.
June 8-10	Responsive Classroom/or Montessori Training Courses	Teachers will either participate in “wrap around courses” through the UD Montessori Teacher Preparation Residency

		program or in further RC training.
Summer 2020 5 weeks	Montessori Teacher Preparation – Part 2	It is expected that teachers who do not have Montessori certification will attend the University of Delaware program being developed in partnership with the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector.

The daily plan will be structured to allow for teachers to have a planning period each day. However, this planning period will be structured to allow for children to have large blocks of uninterrupted time to work each day or at least for several days each week. Planning periods will allow several teachers at each age grouping to work together in a PLC model. In addition, teachers will participate in a weekly after school time using the study group model outlined below.

The expected teacher work day is 8:00 - 4:00 with the exception of the summer inservice days that will end at 5:00 and the twice weekly after school meetings that end at 4:30. Student-led conference days will use flexible scheduling to assure parent attendance outside the regular school day hours.

- c. An explanation of how professional development will be aligned with the interim (e.g. classroom, diagnostic, formative) assessments and staff evaluation processes, and how it will be adjusted during the year to address areas of need that are identified;**

During the school year, teachers will be involved in ongoing child-centered discussions. From these discussions, they will build a culture of problem-solving to best meet children’s needs, learning from each other, and developing their own professional goals as individuals and small groups. SMS will cultivate a community in which trust and openness allow for the sharing of the challenges that exist in providing students with an innovative environment supporting the individual needs of each child. To accomplish this, the school will first, establish a PLC/Study Group leadership team. Each year the PLC/Study Group leadership team will determine specific areas of focus for the school based on teacher observations, student needs, and assessment data. This will give the SMS staff a method to focus the entire community on a particular topic, which serves the purpose of moving the school forward in an effective, coordinated way. Likewise, teachers will reflect on student learning challenges in their individual classrooms to develop individual professional development goals and plans with the Head of School and Education Director. Second, the school will engage in weekly coaching with the NCMPS/MW Montessori training program. This coaching will include a weekly observation and debriefing focused on the individual teacher and the needs of the children.

The mid-year and end-year review days as outlined in the PD schedule above offer an opportunity for the teachers, Education Director and Head of School to review student progress, challenges for the school community, and to seek opportunities for embedded professional development to address student needs. In addition to summative and formative academic achievement data, the school will use the [NCMPS Rubric of Essential Elements of Montessori Practice in the Public Sector](#) to evaluate the school's status in implementing the Montessori approach. These routine reviews will keep the school's PD mission focused and targeted to the performance goals outlined in the educational plan. This process of a school wide review of data and the NCMPS rubric will ensure that the teachers and assistant teachers have a voice in the professional development plan.

**d. An explanation of how the professional development program will be evaluated to assess its effectiveness and success.**

The leadership team, along with lead teachers at each grade level will review a large data set at the end of each year including student assessment data, aggregated teacher observation data, results from teacher meetings, PD surveys, parent feedback, and etc. to guide planning for the subsequent school year. Teachers, students, administrators and parents are all important partners and their involvement in the school community at every level will ensure that the professional development is meeting the needs of the individual teacher and the school as a whole. All required DDOE professional development provided via PDMS will be documented as well to ensure all teachers are up to date on state requirements.

**e. An explanation of the school's system for providing coaching and professional development for the School Leader. Explain how the school will know what coaching and professional development the School Leader needs**

The Board President will be an advocate for the school leader to grow professionally. As a part of the routine evaluation process, the head of school and the board president will identify areas for growth. The evaluation process will consist of the DPAS II as well as the NCMPS rubric for Montessori Schools. The research on school leadership demonstrates that there are habits that support the effective functioning of learning communities. As Sally Zepeda (2013) states, "principals create conditions in the workplace that enhance the ability of other individuals to motivate themselves". This is the kind of leadership that will be required in a Montessori school. The principal of SMS will need opportunities to grow their leadership skills to assist them in thinking about the use of time and space in the day, building vertical and horizontal relationships in the school community, and observing and providing feedback in a Montessori classroom. If the School leader is not Montessori certified, they will be encouraged to complete Montessori administrative preparation prior to opening the school or soon after.

**References:**

Dagen, A.S. & Bean, R.M. (2014). *High-Quality Research-Based Professional Development: An Essential for Enhancing High-Quality Teaching*. Professional Development in Education.  
Zepeda, S. (2013). *Professional Development: What Works*. Routledge:London.