New Nature-based Montessori School Looking for Lead Teachers in the

Elburn/St Charles/Geneva/Batavia Area

**Who we are:**

Headwaters Academy is a community of parents and educators forging an alternative, independent learning path for children in Northern Illinois on a 5-acre farm. Headwaters Academy will feature a Montessori-inspired curriculum based in nature and place. We open our doors August 2025 with Kindergarten through Grade 8 learners, and will extend the academic offering incrementally through Grade 12 as our learners age.

#### Headwaters Academy is nestled on a peaceful 5-acre farm among the rolling fields where Elburn meets Campton Hills. Fencing and natural barriers maintain privacy, and multiple pastures, outbuildings, and gardens support endless opportunities for learning outdoors. Inside, learners explore all levels of the beautiful schoolhouse which features a professional kitchen, cozy library, abundant light, and the delightful flow of Montessori classroom design.

**What we do:**

Headwaters Academy is a nature-based, Montessori microschool where each learner’s unique gifts are celebrated and supported by a flexible, individualized learning environment. We prepare students for a lifetime of discovery by fostering curiosity, empathy, and love for the Earth.

Our curious students develop critical thinking skills, build deep relationships across all grade levels, and experience cutting-edge learning opportunities indoors and out on our 5-acre farm. We prioritize time in nature in all seasons. We value practical skills alongside academic pursuits.

We are building an educational home where students can develop individual curiosities and gifts alongside students of all ages. We value academic learning, emotional regulation, and practical life experiences to optimize success in a shifting future. We practice radical acceptance and celebrate diversity, creating a sense of belonging for each child. We acknowledge the essential role families play within our learning community.

**We are currently hiring for Lead Teacher positions. However, we welcome inquiries about other school-related roles, including substitute teaching, extracurricular instruction, and specialist positions. If you have skills or expertise to offer, we would love to hear from you!**

**Lead Teacher Experience and Education Qualifications:**

* Minimum of Bachelor’s Degree in education, psychology, child development or related field
* Experience in classroom settings – minimum 2 years
* Montessori certificate preferred, or willing to train
* Experience teaching in multi-age classrooms
* Interest or experience working in nature based/farm school, comfortable caring for the gardens, farm and potential animals

**Lead Teacher Skills:**

* Passion for the school’s vision including it’s development from the start as well as its future growth
* A love for supporting the whole child
* Passionate about project-based and hands-on, real-life learning
* Creates a harmonious relationship with parents, teaching staff and administration based on clear, responsive communication
* Ability to differentiate and create individualized learning plans to foster students with various abilities
* Ability to give contemporaneous feedback to students
* Empathetic, nurturing, kind and patient
* Self driven, yet works well collaboratively
* Organized planning and record keeping skills

**Primary Responsibilities:**

### 1. **Preparing the Learning Environment**

* Curate and maintain a well-organized, attractive, and child-centered classroom.
* Ensure the availability of learning materials appropriate for the age level being taught.
* Rotate materials based on students’ inspiration, needs and interests.

### 2. **Delivering Instruction**

* Present lessons individually, in small groups, or to the whole class based on each child's developmental stage and readiness.
* Integrate subjects such as math, language, geography, science, cultural studies and nature through interdisciplinary lessons.
* Encourage hands-on learning and exploration.

### 3. **Observing and Assessing Students**

* Regularly observe students to understand their needs, interests, and progress.
* Maintain detailed records of individual student development.
* Using the Illinois state standards as a guide to insure students are progressing.
* Use observations to guide individualized lesson plans and support.

### 4. **Fostering Independence**

* Encourage self-directed learning by allowing students to choose activities within a structured framework.
* Teach practical life skills and foster responsibility for oneself and the community.

### 5. **Encouraging Social and Emotional Growth**

* Support positive conflict resolution and peer collaboration.
* Teach and model respect for others, self, and the environment.
* Guide students in developing time management and decision-making skills.

### 6. **Communication and Collaboration**

* Maintain open communication with parents about their child’s progress.
* Collaborate with colleagues to align classroom practices and curriculum.
* Participate in parent-teacher conferences, school events, and professional development.

### 7. **Classroom Management**

* Create a calm and orderly environment where students feel secure and motivated to learn.
* Balance freedom and limits, ensuring respect for classroom guidelines.

### 8. **Modeling Lifelong Learning**

* Continually seek personal and professional growth.
* Stay informed about best practices in education.

**Salary and Benefits:**

* $48,000 - $55,000
* Staff tuition discounts, health insurance package, retirement plan

**Please supply a cover letter and resume to:**

academy@headwatersil.org