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Teaching at Little River Community School

Little River Community School, founded in 1999, is a K-12 democratic school with forty-two students (31 full-time, 11 part-time), located on Birdsfoot Farm in Canton, New York. For next year, there are three teachers, Steve Molnar (Olders), Kelly Newman Burnham (Middles), and Leon Sawyko (science and math). We are seeking a full-time teacher to work with us in our Youngers program, and additionally we will hire an aide to work with that group. We currently have fifteen students (twelve on an average day) in the Younger's program in grades K-2 working with a teacher and an aide. With enough enrollment, we would consider splitting the Youngers group in two, and hire a second teacher instead of an aide.

We are looking for a teacher with at least several years of experience working with children, with an interest in democratic education. In addition to teaching basic academic and social skills to the Youngers, teachers may be asked to share special interests like art, music, other languages, or computer science with older students. It is important to be comfortable with all ages, K-12, though this position is primarily working with the Youngers. Teacher certification is not required.

Our ideal candidate would plan to stay with the school for several or more years. Qualities we are looking for include: a passion for working with children, flexibility, patience, ability to think on your feet, long term interest in teaching, problem-solving abilities, strong communication skills, reliability, behavior management skills, a sense of humor, confidence, and self-motivation.

A teacher aide may have less experience, but should enjoy working with children, be reliable, and show self-confidence. The aide must be able to work well with and under the direction of the teachers to meet the academic and social needs of our students. This is initially a one year position.

Little River provides a unique environment where students are trusted and seen as inherently self-motivated to learn about their world. Our teachers facilitate and support the students' quest for knowledge and understanding. Little River has multi-age classrooms where students learn together in cooperation and are grouped by their ability and interests. Little River provides strong academic classes in a small group setting. Some academic and special classes may have all the Youngers, and others only three or four. The teachers need to generate excitement and interest on the students' terms. Special emphasis is put on problem solving skills and hands-on experiences. All of the

students and teachers come together several times a week in a morning meeting, facilitated by the students, for discussion, to make plans, and solve problems. Youngers are given ample opportunity for unstructured play and to choose their own activities. Each student has an individualized curriculum developed by the student, teachers, and parents. Visit us on the web at www.littleriverschool.org for more information about the school.

Teachers are on-site from 7:30 am - 2:30 pm. After school hours, the teachers have a weekly staff meeting, do class preparations, and complete some administrative tasks. In the fall, we have conferences with each family to make an individualized curriculum for each student. There are all-school meetings every six weeks with the students, parents, and teachers.

Little River follows the local school district's calendar for holidays and snow days. Our final day is just before Memorial Day weekend. There are no classes during the summer months, but there are some minimal responsibilities shared by the staff.

The position(s) will begin on August 7th. We use the month of August for training, preparation, and team building.

The teacher salary is \$26,500 a year (first year) with benefits including free tuition for a teacher's child, a small health fund, and a supportive environment with a lot of academic freedom. The aide is paid \$15/hour for 20-30 hours per week.

If this sounds like the job for you, please complete an application.

Application Process for the Teaching and Aide Positions

The deadline for this round of applications is April 24 or until positions are filled.

To apply for one of the positions (teacher or aide), fill out the appropriate application. Be sure to include a resume and three references. Please e-mail your completed application to steve@littleriverschool.org.

Teachers, parents, and students are involved in the selection process. Promising teacher candidates will be invited to do an activity with the students, to meet with staff, and then interview with the families. The interview process would happen during the first week of May. The process for the teacher aide will follow after.

Please call if you have any questions about the school or the process.



Teacher Job Description

A full time teacher at Little River Community School is responsible for and expected to:

Work with students of all ages

Assess the academic and social needs of each student

Develop and implement an individualized curriculum in cooperation with the student, parent(s), and teachers, for each student

Prepare and teach academic and special classes

Facilitate problem-solving with students, parents, and staff

Be on-site at school during all school hours and while students arrive and depart before and after school.

Attend all regular and special staff meetings

Attend all regular and special parent and student meetings

Attend special activities with students like overnights and field trips

Be available for individual parent meetings and conferences as needed

Maintain the appropriate student and administrative records

Maintain the confidentiality of each student and family

Share committee work with other staff including outreach, fundraising, and maintenance

Share some administrative tasks



Teacher Application

Please answer the following questions on another sheet of paper.

- 1) Why do you want to teach at Little River Community School?
- 2) Describe your philosophy of education.
- 3) What experience do you have working with children?
- 4) What personal strengths can you bring to the school?
- 5) What would you like to learn with this experience or what special challenges might this experience present you?
- 6) How do you approach issues of classroom management and discipline with children?
- 7) What is your approach to teaching basic academic skills? Do you have any experience with teaching structured language, basics math skills, or social skills? If so, please describe.
- 8) How can you help children learn problem-solving skills?
- 9) Is there anything else you would like share about yourself?
- 10) At Little River the pay is low (compared to the public school) and the role of teacher requires a lot of time and energy. Are you up to this? How long could you see yourself working at Little River?
- 11) Please list three references that we may contact. Include name, address, phone number, and in what context they know you or your work. Also enclose a copy of your resume.



Job Description: Teacher Aide

A teacher aide at Little River Community School is responsible for and expected to:

Be on-site during designated hours

Work with and follow the directions of the classroom teacher(s)

Work with students in the specific class(es) for which you are hired

Attend staff meetings as needed

Maintain the confidentiality of each student and family

Maintain the appropriate student and administrative records



Teacher Aide Application

Please answer the following questions on another sheet of paper.

- 1) Why do you want to work at Little River Community School?
- 2) What experience do you have working with children?
- 3) What personal strengths can you bring to the school?
- 4) What would you like to learn with this experience or what special challenges might this experience present you?
- 5) Is there anything else you would like share about yourself?
- 6) Please list three references that we may contact. Include name, address, phone number, and in what context they know you or your work. Also enclose a copy of your resume.