DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Hershey Montessori School

Reports to: Head of School
Employment: Full-Time, Exempt
Location: Northeastern Ohio

ABOUT HERSHEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Founded in 1978, Hershey Montessori School is a premier Montessori institution with an international reputation for educational excellence, innovation, and leadership. As one of the pioneering schools in the world to embrace Dr. Maria Montessori's educational philosophy across the full continuum of human development—from infancy through high school graduation—Hershey offers an extraordinary and comprehensive educational experience.

Serving children and adolescents from birth through age 18 across two campuses in Northeastern Ohio, Hershey provides an authentic Montessori education grounded in the principles of independence, intellectual curiosity, purposeful work, personal responsibility, and community engagement.

The School's distinctive educational model includes its internationally recognized adolescent program, situated on a working farm, where academic rigor is integrated with meaningful work, entrepreneurship, environmental stewardship, and community life.

Affiliated with the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), Hershey Montessori School is recognized for its commitment to advancing Montessori education and demonstrating the profound impact of this approach on the development of capable, confident, compassionate, and independent young adults.

Hershey Montessori School offers more than an exceptional education. It prepares young people with the knowledge, character, resilience, and independence to lead meaningful, productive, and successful adult lives.

Philanthropy plays an essential role in sustaining this remarkable educational model, expanding access through scholarships, strengthening the School's programs and facilities, and ensuring its continued leadership in Montessori education for generations to come.. The Development Director will have a unique opportunity to help shape the future of one of the world's distinctive Montessori educational institutions.

POSITION SUMMARY

Hershey Montessori School seeks an accomplished, strategic, and experienced professional Development Director to lead the School's philanthropic advancement and expand its fundraising capacity.

Reporting directly to the Head of School and serving as a member of the administrative leadership team, the Development Director will provide the vision, strategy, and leadership necessary to grow

philanthropic revenue, with a particular emphasis on major gifts, donor engagement, and long-term philanthropic partnerships.

A central priority of this position will be to develop and implement a comprehensive major gifts program, establishing the strategies, systems, and processes necessary to identify prospective donors, cultivate meaningful relationships, secure significant philanthropic commitments, and provide exceptional donor stewardship.

Working collaboratively with the Head of School, Board of Trustees, Development Committee, and school leadership, the Director will strengthen relationships with existing supporters while expanding Hershey's philanthropic network locally, nationally, and internationally.

The successful candidate will be an experienced fundraising professional who combines strategic vision with demonstrated execution, exceptional relationship-building skills, and a passion for connecting donors with meaningful opportunities to make a lasting impact.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Development Leadership

- Develop and execute a strategic fundraising plan with measurable goals to increase philanthropic revenue and support the School's long-term sustainability.
- Partner with the Head of School, Board of Trustees, and Development Committee to align fundraising priorities, strengthen donor engagement, and foster a culture of philanthropy.
- Position the School for successful future capital, endowment, scholarship, and special fundraising initiatives and campaigns.
- Establish and implement meaningful donor stewardship processes and recognition programs that communicate the impact of philanthropy and inspire continued giving.

Major Gifts and Philanthropic Partnerships

- Lead the development and expansion of a comprehensive major gifts program, including strategies and processes for donor identification, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Build and manage a robust portfolio and pipeline of prospective major donors, establishing individualized engagement strategies that lead to significant and sustained philanthropic commitments.
- Partner closely with the Head of School, the Board and school leadership to cultivate relationships, engage prospective donors, and secure major and transformational gifts.
- Expand Hershey Montessori School's network of philanthropic supporters, including individuals, families, alumni, foundations, and corporations and other potential partners.
- Develop opportunities for multiyear commitments, endowed gifts, planned giving, and other forms of long-term philanthropic investment.

- Maintain an active schedule of meaningful, personal visits with current and prospective major donors, targeting a minimum of 50–70 visits annually, averaging 4-6 visits per month. Visits are either in person or through virtual meeting venues. Document all donor interactions, including visits, follow-up activities, and next steps in the School's CRM system and follow established moves management protocols to ensure systematic identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship. Emphasis will be placed on advancing donor relationships, strengthening engagement, and securing increased philanthropic commitments.

Annual Giving, Building Awareness, and Donor Engagement

- Lead strategies to increase annual giving revenue, participation, donor retention, and the number of donors who deepen their philanthropic commitments over time.
- Strengthen engagement with parents, grandparents, alumni, former families, and friends of the School while cultivating new constituencies of support.
- Create pathways that encourage annual supporters to become major donors through thoughtful cultivation and relationship management.
- Develop meaningful opportunities to introduce prospective supporters to Hershey's distinctive educational programs, leadership, students, and broader mission.
- Provide strategic leadership for the School's annual Gala and other fundraising, cultivation, and stewardship events, ensuring alignment with philanthropic priorities and measurable financial and relationship-building outcomes.
- Engage and support the Board of Trustees and Development Committee as ambassadors, advocates, and active participants in philanthropic relationship building.
- Strengthen relationships with foundations, corporations, and institutional partners to expand grant funding and other philanthropic opportunities.
- Represent Hershey Montessori School in the broader philanthropic community, building awareness of its international leadership and distinctive educational mission.
- Partner with the Head of School and Communications team to create compelling cases for support, donor communications, proposals, and philanthropic messaging that convey Hershey's educational distinction and impact.

Development Operations and Team Leadership

- Provide leadership and oversight of the development function, including staff, budget, donor management systems, and fundraising operations.
- Establish effective processes for prospect research, donor portfolio management, gift tracking, stewardship, and fundraising performance evaluation.
- Use donor data and measurable outcomes to inform fundraising strategies, prioritize opportunities, and assess progress toward established goals.

- Ensure professional standards of donor confidentiality, ethical fundraising, and responsible stewardship of philanthropic resources.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will bring demonstrated fundraising success, strategic leadership, and a genuine enthusiasm for the transformative potential of Montessori education.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree and a minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience in philanthropic fundraising,
- Strong strategic planning, organizational, and leadership capabilities, with the ability to translate fundraising goals into effective programs and measurable results in increased philanthropic revenue.
- Demonstrated success with relationship-building, developing major gifts, increasing the annual fund, implementing stewardship programs and/or experience with capital campaigns, endowment fundraising, planned giving, or transformational gifts.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to articulate a compelling case for philanthropic support and confidently solicit significant gifts.
- Familiarity with donor management systems, prospect moves management, fundraising analytics, and effective stewardship practices.
- High professional integrity, sound judgment, initiative, and collaborative leadership style.
- Experience leading development staff and engaging volunteer fundraising leadership.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Salary is highly competitive and commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Benefits include:

- Health and dental insurance
- Retirement plan
- Possible occasional remote days
- Paid vacation and holidays
- Professional development opportunities
- Tuition remission or discounts for eligible children enrolled in qualifying Hershey Montessori School programs