
presents an invitation
to apply
for the position of
Principal
Ridgeline Montessori
Public Charter School
Eugene, Oregon



"We provide an academically rigorous Montessori education. Students balance their freedom to explore and think for themselves with their responsibility to work and learn within a community."



The Eugene Community...

Located in Oregon's scenic Willamette Valley, Eugene is a vibrant, progressive community known for its strong commitment to education, equity, and the environment.

Home to the University of Oregon, the city combines the intellectual energy of a university town with the warmth and creativity of a close-knit community.

Families and educators are drawn to Eugene's dynamic blend of cultural richness, outdoor beauty, and deep civic engagement, making it an ideal place for innovative, child-centered education to flourish.

Surrounded by rivers, forests, and mountain views, Eugene offers an exceptional quality of life with abundant opportunities for recreation and connection to nature.

The community values collaboration, sustainability, and lifelong learning - an environment where a school leader can make a meaningful impact while enjoying balance, belonging, and purpose both personally and professionally.

For more information about the community visit:



Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School...

Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School is a thriving K-8 public charter school in Eugene, Oregon, serving approximately 250 students. Founded in 2000 and sponsored by Eugene School District 4J, Ridgeline offers a high-quality, tuition-free public education grounded in Montessori principles and aligned with the expectations of a public school setting.

Our multi-age classrooms, hands-on learning, and individualized instruction nurture curious minds, foster independence, and support the whole child - academically, socially, and emotionally. Students are challenged to think deeply, collaborate with others, and develop the confidence to take meaningful responsibility for their learning and their community.

Ridgeline is also shaped by a strong sense of purpose and community. For more than 25 years, families and educators have worked side by side to create an inclusive, nurturing school where every child is known, supported, and challenged to grow. Ridgeline remains grounded in the belief that education can help children become capable, thoughtful people who contribute positively to their communities and the world.

For more information about the Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School visit:
www.ridgeline.org

The Opportunity...

The next Principal of Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School has a rare opportunity to build on a strong foundation of inspired staff, a mission-driven culture, and a supportive community and lead with clarity, authenticity, and vision to strengthen practice and sustain growth.

Ridgeline's Principal will join a dedicated team of experienced Montessori educators committed to educating the whole child in a joyful, purposeful learning environment. The ideal candidate is a Montessori-aligned instructional leader who fosters trust, models empathy and compassion, and supports an environment where students and adults can thrive.

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Principal's primary focus is instructional leadership - strengthening teaching and learning, supporting student success, and partnering with educators to ensure high-quality Montessori practice across classrooms. In close collaboration with the Executive Director and Operations Manager, the Principal works within a shared leadership model that supports the overall health and sustainability of the school.



School Strengths

- **Authentic Montessori Philosophy and Practice:** Child-centered learning grounded in Montessori principles of independence, purposeful work, and developmentally responsive practice.
- **Strong, Inclusive, and Caring School Community:** A close-knit public Montessori community where students, families, and educators feel known and valued.
- **Dedicated, Collaborative Educators:** Experienced Montessori educators committed to collaboration, reflection, and continuous improvement.
- **Commitment to Equity, Access, and Belonging:** Inclusive, equitable practices that support diverse learners and foster belonging.
- **Emphasis on Whole Child Development and Social-Emotional Learning:** A holistic approach that integrates academic learning with social, emotional, and behavioral development.
- **Engaged Families and Strong Community Partnership:** Active family partnership through communication, volunteerism, and shared purpose.

Complexities and Potential

- **Balancing Montessori Fidelity and Public Accountability:** State and district requirements can create tension with authentic Montessori practice. The Principal will skillfully bridge these domains - maintaining Montessori fidelity while ensuring compliance, transparency, and data-informed improvement.
- **Staffing and Special Education Pressures:** Ridgeline serves a growing percentage of students with disabilities, requiring intentional systems and close collaboration to ensure equitable support. The Principal will bring strong knowledge of Special Education, inclusive practices, and 504 supports; work proactively with the sponsoring district, which provides special education staffing and services for students with IEPs; and help build and sustain consistent, responsive support systems for students and staff. This role calls for thoughtful collaboration, advocacy, and a deep commitment to inclusion within a public Montessori community.
- **Behavioral Growth:** As student needs have become more complex, we're seeking a Principal who can lead proactive, relationship-centered systems that support students' social, emotional, and behavioral growth. The Principal will bring trauma-informed leadership that prioritizes student well-being, restorative practices, and the holistic health of the school community. This includes building staff capacity, fostering a culture of belonging, and strengthening supports that promote regulation and resilience for both students and adults.
- **Charter School Funding Inequity and Sustainability:** As a public charter school, Ridgeline operates with fewer financial resources than neighborhood schools, receiving less than 80% of comparable per-pupil funding while also assuming full responsibility for securing and maintaining its facilities. Within these constraints, Ridgeline carefully stewards its human and financial resources to provide a high-quality public Montessori program that remains sustainable for future generations.

Families are deeply invested in this work and contribute generously through

volunteerism, community partnerships, and fundraising efforts. While financial management and oversight are the responsibility of the Executive Director, the Principal is expected to understand these realities, support efforts to strengthen sustainability and revenue, and align instructional leadership with the long-term health of the school.



Professional Qualifications

The ideal candidate will bring:

- A deep respect for and working knowledge of Montessori philosophy, with a credential or commitment to obtain one.
- Oregon TSPC Principal or Administrator License (or eligibility).
- Successful teaching and leadership experience in K–8 education, preferably in a Montessori or child-centered setting.
- Expertise in Special Education, neurodiversity, and equitable service delivery.
- Strong instructional leadership, systems thinking, and collaborative decision-making.
- Experience in balancing public education compliance with Montessori pedagogy.



Personal Characteristics

Ridgeline seeks a leader who embodies both heart and vision - someone who connects deeply with people while thinking strategically about systems and sustainability.

- **Values-Driven and Purpose-Grounded:** Anchored in Montessori philosophy and Ridgeline's mission, vision and core values.
- **Relational and Trust-Centered:** Builds authentic, transparent, and compassionate relationships.
- **Courageous and Clear Communicator:** Engages in honest, respectful conversations; navigates conflict skillfully; and holds individuals and systems accountable in service of student learning, staff growth, and a healthy school culture.
- **Equity-Minded and Inclusive:** Advocates for all learners; demonstrates cultural humility and fluency.
- **Reflective and Growth-Oriented:** Learns continuously and fosters reflection in others.
- **Joyful and Student-Centered:** Brings warmth, humor, and a genuine love of children and learning.
- **Strategic and Systems-Focused:** Connects vision to action and builds sustainable structures for success.

Compensation & Benefits

The salary range is **\$90,141 – \$130,966** (217 contract days), depending on experience, credentials, and licensure.

***Ridgeline offers comprehensive benefits** designed to support the well-being, stability, and long-term sustainability of school leaders.*

Health Insurance: Comprehensive medical, dental, and vision coverage. The school covers 85% of the premium, with the employee contributing 15%.

Life and Long-Term Disability Insurance: Employer-provided life and long-term disability (LTD) insurance for added financial security.

Retirement: Participation in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), supporting long-term financial planning and stability.

Paid Time Off: Sick leave, personal leave, and paid holidays, supporting work-life balance and well-being.

Professional Development: Ridgeline is committed to investing in ongoing training and professional development for school leadership and staff. This includes support for instructional leadership growth including credential/licensure.

School Breaks: Winter, spring, and summer breaks provide meaningful time to rest, recharge, and sustain long-term leadership effectiveness.

Application Packet

A completed application packet should include the following:

- A formal letter of application
- A completed Ridgeline application form (available upon request)
- A current resume
- Three to five letters of recommendation
- A written statement explaining how you plan to address each of the complexities and potentials listed above.

Send an electronic copy of all application materials to:

Chris Rust, Consultant: cr.codaconsults@gmail.com
Joel Aune, Owner/Chief Operating Officer: gunderaune@gmail.com
Tom Rockefeller, Owner/Chief Operating Officer: rockefeller.tom34@gmail.com

Applications received by March 27, 2026 will receive first consideration
The School retains the right to accept applications until a principal is selected

Ridgeline strives to create an inclusive environment that welcomes and values the diversity of the people we serve. We foster fairness, equity, and inclusion to create a workplace environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. We are most interested in finding the best candidate for the job, and that candidate may be one who comes from a less traditional background. We encourage you to apply, even if you don't meet every one of our qualifications listed.

Ridgeline Montessori Public Charter School prohibits discrimination and harassment on any basis protected by law, including but not limited to an individual's perceived or actual race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status or veterans' status, because of the perceived or actual race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, marital status, age, mental or physical disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status or veterans' status of any other persons with whom the individual associates.

Application materials will become property of NWLA and the school, and will not be returned to the applicant
Please do not contact the school directly regarding the selection process for this position.
All inquiries, including those from applicants with disabilities who need help in completing application materials, should be made to the following NWLA Associates
Joel Aune | Email: gunderaune@gmail.com

Northwest Leadership Associates | gunderaune@gmail.com gunderaune@superintendentsearch.com | Richland, WA 99352 US

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