

# Primary Lead Teacher

*AMI Preferred · Full-Time · Richmond, Virginia*

At Wild Fern Montessori School, we believe every child deserves access to an authentic Montessori education — regardless of their family's financial circumstances. As a small, mission-driven nonprofit in the heart of Richmond, Virginia, we offer a genuine three-year-cycle Primary experience grounded in AMI principles, financial equity through our Sliding Scale Tuition Program, government childcare subsidy provider status, and a tight-knit community where every team member's voice matters.

This is a rare opportunity to do meaningful work in a school that is growing, evolving, and deeply committed to its people. If you are a passionate Montessorian who wants your expertise to shape something lasting, this is your community.

✓ **Position:** Primary Lead Teacher (Ages 3–6)

✓ **Certification:** AMI Preferred (AMS Considered)

✓ **Schedule:** Full-Time, Monday – Friday

✓ **Location:** Richmond, Virginia (Lakeside/Brook Rd Corridor)

✓ **Start Date:** Late July 2026

✓ **Compensation:** \$38,000–\$46,000 depending on certification and experience.

## WHY WILD FERN?

We know that talented Montessori educators have choices. Here is what sets us apart:

- Your voice is heard — we are small by design, collaborative by nature, and growing with intention
- Authentic Montessori is non-negotiable — no compromises on the three-year cycle, prepared environment, or AMI principles
- Financial equity is part of our identity — our Sliding Scale Tuition Program makes Montessori accessible to families who otherwise could not afford it
- We are in an exciting growth phase — Fall 2026 brings a new, dedicated facility at 5610 Brook Road
- Community isn't a buzzword here — it is woven into every parent engagement event, fundraiser, and staff meeting
- We invest in our people — professional development support, 401(k) with Safe Harbor match, generous paid time off, and more

## THE ROLE

As a Primary Lead Teacher at WFMS, you are the heartbeat of the classroom. You will plan and sustain a beautifully prepared AMI Montessori environment for children ages 3–6, mentor and lead your classroom assistants, and serve as a trusted partner to the families in your community.

This is a full-time, lead teaching position with real responsibility, real relationships, and real impact.

### **Planning, Preparation & Instruction**

- Plan and implement progressive lessons for each child using the authentic AMI Montessori curriculum throughout the year across all key areas of the classroom
- Maintain a carefully prepared, organized, and aesthetically inviting environment, thoughtfully rotating materials when necessary and appropriate
- Oversee classroom flow, managing the rhythm and energy of the work cycle with skill and calm
- Conduct regular planning meetings with assistants to review children's progress, revitalize the environment, and align on lessons
- Use observations, albums/scope and sequences, Montessori Compass, and children's portfolios to guide individual child plans
- Maintain accurate progress records in Montessori Compass
- Order classroom materials and manage the classroom budget responsibly
- Maintain a safe, clean, nurturing environment that upholds all AMI Montessori, licensing, and health standards
- Support daily practical life activities: snack, lunch, outdoor play, dressing, toileting, and rest

### **Communication & Community**

- Build respectful, warm, consistent communication with each child's family
- Respond to parent questions and concerns promptly and professionally
- Send weekly classroom newsletters to offer parent education and highlight curriculum, activities, and upcoming events
- Lead parent conferences twice per year to share each child's growth and development
- Educate and engage families in Montessori philosophy, finding meaningful ways to involve them
- Model Grace and Courtesy — for children and adults alike
- Adhere to WFMS confidentiality and communication policies to protect the privacy and dignity of children, families, and colleagues at all times

### **Leadership & Professional Responsibility**

- Confidently and professionally mentor, train, and lead your classroom assistants, including holding them accountable with care and directness
- Participate in and contribute to staff meetings, professional development days, and school events
- Attend and participate in WFMS community events, Open Houses, orientations, and fundraisers
- Complete a minimum of one week of on-site preparatory work during Summer Session (classroom setup, admin, professional development)
- Comply with all Virginia VDOE continuing education requirements for licensed childcare providers
- Check and respond to email daily; adhere to all school policies outlined in the Employee Handbook
- Participate in ongoing evaluation, including classroom observations and annual self-assessment

## WHO YOU ARE

### Required

- AMI or AMS Montessori Certification (AMI strongly preferred) in the 3–6 age range
- Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field
- Experience managing assistants and navigating the full complexity of a working Primary classroom
- At least 1 year of Montessori classroom experience
- Demonstrated ability to lead and mentor classroom assistants — including navigating hard conversations
- Strong communication skills with children, families, and colleagues
- Experience working with diverse students and families

### Highly Valued

- Experience in a small, nonprofit school environment
- Commitment to community outreach and parent engagement beyond the classroom door
- Familiarity with Montessori Compass or similar documentation platforms

### The Mindset We Need

- Growth-oriented — you seek solutions rather than dwelling on problems
- A team player who understands that in a small school, everyone’s role is equally vital
- Calm, consistent, and reliable — children and families can count on you
- Deeply committed to Montessori as a philosophy, not just a credential
- Able to hold the bigger picture of the school’s mission alongside the day-to-day of classroom life
- Honest, direct, and open to feedback — from administrators, families, and your own reflection

## COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

WFMS offers a competitive compensation package that goes beyond the paycheck — including a real seat at the table, genuine collaboration with school leadership, and the benefits listed below:

<b>Voice &amp; Influence</b> Your perspective shapes school decisions	<b>Strategic Planning</b> Included in school-wide planning process
<b>Head of School Collaboration</b> Direct, ongoing partnership with HOS	<b>Potential for Annual Bonus</b> Based on performance and school growth
<b>401(k)</b> Safe Harbor match: 100% of first 3%, 50% of next 2%	<b>Professional Development</b> School-supported PD & conferences
<b>Paid Time Off</b> 10 days per school year	<b>Family Tuition Discount</b> 30% off enrollment
<b>Paid Program Breaks &amp; Paid Holidays</b> 28 days + Summer Break / 15 holidays annually	<b>Bereavement Leave</b> 3 days per school year

## PRE-HIRE REQUIREMENTS

The following must be completed upon hire and before the school year begins:

- Current Tuberculosis (TB) test
- Virginia Central Registry check, state background check, and fingerprinting
- Any other state background checks if you have resided outside of Virginia in the past five years
- First Aid / CPR Certification
- Proof of Montessori certification or letter of current standing from training center

## OUR CULTURE & COMMITMENT

Wild Fern Montessori School is rooted in three pillars: **authentic Montessori, financial equity, and a safe space for all.** We began in 2018 as Glen Allen Community Montessori School, and after a period of thoughtful reassessment during COVID, relocated to Lakeside — a community better aligned with our mission — where we have been growing steadily ever since. Fall 2026 will bring our most exciting chapter yet: a purpose-built facility at 5610 Brook Road.

We are an all-hands-on-deck environment. We lean on each other, lift each other up, and show up together for each other and our families. If you are looking for a school where you can grow, lead, and be seen, we hope you will consider joining us.

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## Ready to join our community?

We'd love to hear from you. Please send your resume, a brief cover letter, and proof of Montessori certification to our Head of School, Kate Lipka, at [kate@wildfernmont.org](mailto:kate@wildfernmont.org). Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.

*Wild Fern Montessori School is an equal opportunity employer.*