

**CREEKSTONE MONTESSORI SCHOOL  
SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILE**

**Please provide your completed Candidate Profile to Dr. Michelle Sturm at Creekstone Montessori School. Your Candidate Profile will be posted on Creekstone Montessori School's website once received.**

**Candidate Name: Jacqueline West**

**Contact Information**

**Phone: 615-220-2426**

**Email Address: jacqueline.west@outlook.com**

**Connection to Creekstone Montessori School**

- Community Member
- Parent
- Teacher

(I could serve as either parent or community member)

**Desired Term of Office**

- One year
- Two years
- Three years

(Willing to serve one or two years)

**Interest Statement**

What are the reasons you would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board?

As a parent of two children at Creekstone, and as a former educator, I deeply value the school's work and mission. I would like to contribute what I can toward helping the school continue to flourish as a part of the broader Red Wing community.

**Background and Experience**

How long have you been involved with Creekstone Montessori School and in what capacity (committees, volunteering, etc.)?

Both of my children have attended CMS since they were toddlers, starting back in Red Cottage days. We have been part of Creekstone since its founding, and I now have a child in kindergarten and another in fifth grade/upper elementary.

I have volunteered with landscaping work, with chaperoning/transportation to field trips, and as a guest author/reader in several classrooms.

What knowledge and experience would you bring to the School Board?

I am an author, primarily of books for younger readers, which has allowed me to travel the country visiting libraries and schools of all kinds. Before turning to writing full time, I was a high school English teacher. During college and grad school, I worked as an assistant teacher at Montessori Children's House in Madison, WI and as a music teacher in both Madison and Eau Claire.

One of my children is neurodivergent, which has given me another set of experiences. I'm familiar with the special education staff and services at CMS, as well as with evaluations, services, and therapies provided by other local professionals. I would be glad to serve as an advocate and representative for families like ours.

What areas of expertise would you bring to the School Board?

Thanks to my teaching certification and work history, I have a fairly broad background in education and in literacy. I also have many years' worth of connections and experiences in the world of literature, particularly in children's books. I am currently serving as the vice president of the Red Wing Public Library Board, and my experience there as well as on other local boards (Friends of the Sheldon, Soapbox Players, etc.) has given me insight into the role and function of an advisory board.

What opportunities do you envision for Creekstone Montessori School in the short and/or long term?

I would love to see Creekstone continue to grow, both literally and figuratively! My biggest hope is that it could expand to include 7<sup>th</sup> and possibly 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. I would also love to see it build on its current offerings in all non-core areas—music, art, physical education, etc.—to serve children of all interests and strengths.

Please provide any other background or experience you would like voters to consider.

I'm a fourth-generation public school educator—my mother, grandparents, and great-grandmother were all teachers—and I am a staunch advocate for quality public schools. I believe in equal access and opportunity for all children, whatever their background or ability, and I value Montessori's child-directed, holistic, empathetic philosophy.

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**Candidate Name:** Emma Lundgren

**Contact Information**

**Phone:** 651-269-1145

**Email Address:** elundgren@creekstonemontessori.org

**Connection to Creekstone Montessori School**

- Community Member
- Parent
- Teacher

**Desired Term of Office**

- One year
- Two years
- Three years

**Interest Statement**

What are the reasons you would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board?

I would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board because I believe that it is important to have teacher voices represented. I believe that without input from the teachers, the school board may not understand how and why certain situations affect teachers.

**Background and Experience**

How long have you been involved with Creekstone Montessori School and in what capacity (committees, volunteering, etc.)?

This is my second year teaching at Creekstone. I am a Lead Guide in a Lower Elementary classroom. I also started what has been "sort of" the Sunshine Committee, that runs fun things like Secret Santa, Potlucks, and more!

What knowledge and experience would you bring to the School Board?

I would bring the knowledge of what works best day to day in the classroom, and how that fits into the working of the entire school. I also have experience in curriculum planning, extra programs planning, and

my years of education and teaching. I also have connections that have helped me bring art programs to my classroom.

What areas of expertise would you bring to the School Board?

I have knowledge in K-6 education, curriculum planning and implementing, child development, social and emotional development and connections within the public school system to help us stay connected and informed of different school district decisions.

What opportunities do you envision for Creekstone Montessori School in the short and/or long term?

I would love to see Creekstone do more programs/events that include the entire community. I also would also love to see our school grounds be more fit to our school environment and student body.

Please provide any other background or experience you would like voters to consider.

I am truly passionate about this school and the people involved in it. I hope to be a part of this school for as long as I can be. This is somewhere that feels like home, and I hope to help make it feel like that for others in the future.

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**Candidate Name:** Katie Ramstad

**Contact Information**

**Phone:** 651-380-2176

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**Connection to Creekstone Montessori School**

- Community Member: Born and raised in Red Wing
- Parent: I am a grandparent to two students at Creekstone Montessori.
- Teacher: I am the Behavior Support Specialist at Creekstone Montessori School.

**Desired Term of Office**

- One year
- Two years X
- Three years

**Interest Statement**

**What are the reasons you would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board?**

I am interested in serving on the Creekstone Montessori School Board because I care deeply about the school's mission and the students and families it serves. In my current role as a Behavior Support Specialist, I see firsthand the impact that a thoughtful, student-centered approach can have on children's academic, social, and emotional development.

Serving on the Board would allow me to contribute at a broader level by supporting strategic decisions, strengthening programming, and helping ensure that all students continue to receive high-quality, individualized education. I am especially motivated to support collaboration between staff, families, and leadership to maintain a strong, inclusive school community.

**Background and Experience**

**How long have you been involved with Creekstone Montessori School and in what capacity?**

I have been involved with Creekstone Montessori School since April 2026 in my role as a Behavior Support Specialist. In this position, I collaborate closely with administration, special education staff, and classroom teachers to support student success.

Even though I'm relatively new to the school, I've had the opportunity to build strong connections and get a good sense of the school's culture and day-to-day operations.

## **Knowledge and Experience**

### **What knowledge and experience would you bring to the School Board?**

I bring over 25 years of experience in human services, education, and behavioral health. My background includes case management, mental health services, and early childhood education, as well as experience working within highly regulated systems that require accountability, documentation, and collaboration.

I have managed complex caseloads, developed service and treatment plans, and worked closely with interdisciplinary teams. This has strengthened my ability to think critically, problem-solve, and make decisions that balance individual needs with organizational goals.

In addition, my experience in education has given me practical insight into curriculum development, classroom management, and student support strategies.

## **Areas of Expertise**

### **What areas of expertise would you bring to the School Board?**

My key areas of expertise include:

- Behavioral support and social-emotional development
- Case management and systems navigation
- Mental health and trauma-informed practices
- Early childhood and elementary education
- Collaboration across multidisciplinary teams
- Policy compliance and documentation standards

I also bring strong communication skills and experience working with diverse populations, which supports effective engagement with families, staff, and the broader community.

## **Vision and Opportunities**

### **What opportunities do you envision for Creekstone Montessori School in the short and/or long term?**

In the short term, I see opportunities to continue strengthening student support systems, particularly around social-emotional learning and behavioral support, ensuring all students have the tools they need to succeed. Supporting staff with resources and collaboration is also key to maintaining a strong learning environment.

In the long term, I believe Creekstone has the opportunity to further expand its impact by continuing to build strong community partnerships, enhancing programming, and maintaining its commitment to

individualized, student-centered education. Sustaining a focus on inclusivity and accessibility will be essential as the school grows.

### **Additional Background**

**Please provide any other background or experience you would like voters to consider.**

In addition to my professional experience, I have a strong history of community involvement and leadership. I am a graduate of the Blandin Community Leadership Program and have served as Vice Chair of the Red Wing Human Rights Commission. I have also contributed to several community organizations focused on youth development and family support.

These experiences reflect my commitment to service, collaboration, and creating inclusive communities, values that align closely with the mission of Creekstone Montessori School.



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Candidate Name: James Leise

**Contact Information**

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Email Address: jamesaleise@gmail.com

**Connection to Creekstone Montessori School**

- Community Member
- Parent
- Teacher

**Desired Term of Office**

- One year
- Two years
- Three years

**Interest Statement**

What are the reasons you would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board?

Both to give back and understand/direct move the trajectory of the school.

**Background and Experience**

How long have you been involved with Creekstone Montessori School and in what capacity (committees, volunteering, etc.)?

I have been serving as a lead Upper Elementary Guide for two years.

What knowledge and experience would you bring to the School Board?

I have thirty years of education experience, served on Red Wing Public Schools Foundation Board, served as Secretary for ELC Board, and

What areas of expertise would you bring to the School Board?

First hand experience within school,

as President of Hedin Hertzogel Memorial Foundation.

connections with Public School System, experience setting up similar summer programming.

What opportunities do you envision for Creekstone Montessori School in the short and/or long term?

Expanding creekstone to 7/8 school, expanding/re-locating campus

Please provide any other background or experience you would like voters to consider.



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**Candidate Name: Adam Gettings**

**Contact Information**

**Phone: 612-594-9067**

**Email Address: adamgettings@gmail.com**

**Connection to Creekstone Montessori School**

- Community Member
- Parent**
- Teacher

**Desired Term of Office**

- One year
- Two years**
- Three years

**Interest Statement**

What are the reasons you would like to serve on the Creekstone Montessori School Board?

**I'm passionate about education for my kids and for our community. I have witnessed how well my own children have thrived in Montessori environments so I'd like to help our community grow and serve more children, and have additional resources to better serve current students.**

**Background and Experience**

How long have you been involved with Creekstone Montessori School and in what capacity (committees, volunteering, etc.)?

**I volunteered at Cleanup Day by removing weeds from the walkway. I also volunteered on the Gala Committee. We have only been here for one year so this is the extent of my volunteer work for now.**

What knowledge and experience would you bring to the School Board?

**I served on my son's Montessori school board (Common Roots Montessori) from 2025 to 2026. I worked on the Finance Committee and I was the chair of the Development Committee for the annual gala. I helped our school move from Cathedral Hill to Como, which involved a rebranding and building out a new facility.**

What areas of expertise would you bring to the School Board?

**I have experience in business, finance, engineering and fundraising. I have worked as a startup company founder a few times and I've invested in and advised a large number of startup companies over the years. I was on the board of Red Wing Ignite for 5 years and served as the interim executive director as we onboarded a major EDA grant.**

What opportunities do you envision for Creekstone Montessori School in the short and/or long term?

**I think we can expand to offer Junior High and High School. It would be an incredible accomplishment to do so.**

Please provide any other background or experience you would like voters to consider.

**I was lucky to grow up in a very small town in Southern Illinois and my parents were a farmer and a local school teacher at a small country school. Although we didn't have as many resources as the big city schools, we did have a caring community and the flexibility to provide somewhat personalized education for our kids. I learned a lot about business, engineering and science from working on the farm as a kid, and from my small school where I got to have a role in planning my classes much more so than in a larger school where I would have been just another number. I think this smaller, personalized setting is invaluable and we have such an amazing opportunity to advance our young people with this approach. More so than ever, we need our young people to succeed as they are going to be caring for us and our world in the future!**