

Merit Academy is currently seeking Special Education Teacher to join our faculty, starting this 2021-2022 school year.

ABOUT MERIT ACADEMY:

Merit Academy is a new school-of-choice in the beautiful mountain community of Woodland Park, CO. This classical, Core-Knowledge® school is currently in the start-up process, with doors opened in August, 2021 at max capacity of 184 with over 70 students on the waitlist. There is great need and desire for a classical, public school option in our area.

Merit Academy is scheduled to open to grades K-8 in year one, growing to K-12 over the first five years. At maturity, Merit Academy will have two classes per grade, with purposefully smaller class sizes. Merit is also growing our homeschool enrichment opportunities with Merit Academy.

Merit Academy is unique in that it is situated in an area that provides many opportunities for tremendous Rocky Mountain Enhancements. Additionally, to honor our rural culture and demographics, there is a “rocky mountain version” of a uniform, unique to what you may find in an urban and traditional classical school.

Merit incorporates a vertical and horizontal integration within academics and the House System on various Fridays. This careful design not only allows team cohesion among students of all ages and abilities in community and school projects, but it also provides our valued educators with additional collaboration and planning time.

Vision: To graduate students prepared for success in a free society, promoting civic responsibility and contributing their talents in a flourishing republic by pursuing beauty, truth, and good.

Mission: Merit Academy will cultivate the minds and nurture the hearts of K-12 youth in the Ute Pass/Woodland Park region with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue, employing honored foundations of classical education and Core Knowledge®.

POSITION:

Guidance counselors are critical to the success of our exceptional students. In that, it is important that candidates are a solid fit for the school, community, and curriculum (and vice versa). The school counselor will work with the Deans and Director of Development through the development and growth of Merit Academy. Our staff bring to our students and our school poise, joy, respect and ability to cultivate the positive relationships needed to instill confidence and trust.

It is important that our staff members are courageous, personable, encouraging, and well-spoken. The school culture is one of trust, respect, joy, and deep engagement in one another and in our community. In summary, our staff, parents, and volunteers will inspire students to pursue excellence and put forth their best efforts in all aspects of life.

The ideal candidates will embrace the “rocky mountain version” of traditional-classical education that makes Merit Academy unique. Merit educators are passionate for the Core Knowledge® curriculum, liberal arts, Merit’s vision and mission, and our five virtues of valor, perseverance, responsibility, goodness, and friendship. Staff also embrace and support the ideas and philosophy of America’s

Founding. Guidance counselors will be subject matter experts in ICAP, post-secondary readiness, scheduling, credit checks, graduation requirements, coaching students in executive functioning skills, classical education, Colorado State Standards, and other required educational components.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

This position is a full time counselor position, primarily working with our Logic and Rhetoric students (grades 6-9 and as we grow, 6-12). However, there also will be class visits, programs, and crises interventions involving our School of Grammar (K-5) students .

This position requires knowledge, experience, and understanding of student behavior and responsibility, post-secondary readiness, strategies for success in school (test-taking, ACT/SAT prep, study skills, building healthy relationships), and preparing for life as a responsible and productive citizen.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Understands cognitive, behavioral, and emotional development. Incorporates that knowledge in planning and implementation of class placement, post-secondary readiness, and scheduling
- Sits on the RTI/MTSS team, as needed
- Identifies students who need additional supports in academic readiness (study skills, test taking, etc) or in executive functioning (communication skills, coping skills, relationship-building)
- Collaborates with regular classroom teachers, as needed
- Communicates regularly with parents and staff regarding student's needs, college or career readiness, scholarships, or other availabilities to students
- Assist in the planning and implementation of school-wide testing
- Facilitates credit checks and graduation requirement checks, works with students who need to make up classes or credits for graduation
- Maintains an appropriate and safe learning environment
- Works with Deans during times of crises, follows MA's intervention plans and guidelines for safe schools and safe students
- Cultivate the fundamental virtues of Merit Academy
- Embrace the school's vision and mission
- Additional small group assignments may be prescribed

QUALITIES & CHARACTERISTICS:

- Professional and empathetic when dealing with concerns of parents, families and fellow staff
- Moral character, acts with integrity and wisdom.
- Holds a conviction and dedication to school choice and Merit's vision and mission.
- Emboldens and supports students, parents, and associated volunteers to love learning, embrace our virtues, and promote a life of responsible citizenship in a flourishing republic.
- Engenders trust and assurances in others through effective, personable communication, kindness and community involvement, behavior, and outreach.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS:

- Ability to relate to students and develop relationships to support their skills as scholars and their actions as people.
- Contributes to a collegial faculty throughout the school

- A commitment to classical education, school choice, and the positive contributive culture of Merit Academy
- Understanding of classical education, and classical education's history and foundation within Western civilization
- Able to communicate with poise, winsomeness, kindness, and humility

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Education or similar field
- Must hold a valid CO teaching license in Counseling
- Experience in ICAP and post-secondary planning
- Must love working with students
- Works well with students, staff, and parents
- Conviction in Merit Academy's vision, mission and in a classical, liberal arts education
- Ability to maintain a calming presence, even when faced with crises or adversity
- Strength of character
- Desire for professional development, growth and mentorship

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Understanding of CO standards, alignment, and performance indicators, especially as related to counseling and graduation requirements
- Experience in a charter or independent school

REPORTING STRUCTURE:

Reports to the Dean of Schools and the Director of Development. Works side-by-side with teachers, interventionists, specialists, and staff.

PAY & BENEFITS:

There are 164 contact days and 13 in-service days for teachers. Because of the nature of the job in preparing schedules and transferring students into and out of classes, counselors report five days earlier and remain five days later than teachers, totaling 187 working days. Merit Academy strives for bi-weekly collaboration across grades during our Fridays or extended planning times. Additional in-service (voluntary) or summer work may also include a stipend or comp time, TBD.

- \$40,000-\$52,000, depending on experience
- School holidays and breaks
- Additional 12 days personal/sick leave
- Bonuses for grant awards
- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Optional vision insurance
- Retirement benefits through PERA
- Employee Assistance Program

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Offers of employment are conditional subject to successful background and reference check
- This is a full-time, salaried position, exempt from overtime.
- Employees are at-will employees
- As required by the IRCA, employees must be verified as legally eligible to be employed in the United States.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Please submit the following required items to: HR@merit.academy

- Cover letter
- Resume/CV
- Minimum of three references within the past two years
- Unofficial transcripts and any applicable certifications
- Short essay answers to the following topic:
 - Describe how your work as a counselor would align with Merit Academy's vision and mission.
 - Describe what your "perfect" SEL program would look like to you and what would be involved in designing and implementing it.