



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:  
Ryan Mayo  
(970) 367-7573  
ryan@steamboatmontessori.org

**HEAD OF SCHOOL MICHAEL GIRODO TO STEP DOWN IN JUNE 2022**

**Board of Directors Launches Head of School Search Committee**

**Steamboat Montessori Again Earns “Performance with Distinction” Rating**

**STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO— December 15, 2021** — The governing Board of Steamboat Montessori, Northwest Colorado’s only Montessori school and a public charter, today announces Head of School Michael Girodo will step down from his post at the end of the 2021/2022 school year.

“After much self-reflection, thoughtful consideration with my wife, and in discussion with the Board, I feel now is the right time for both myself and the school to look forward to our next chapters,” said Girodo.

Girodo joined Steamboat Montessori as Head of School in 2017 from Boulder’s Jarrow Montessori. During his tenure, he championed the school as an exciting alternative public educational setting, anchored in the Montessori method, serving Steamboat and the surrounding areas. Notably, Montessori was the only public school in Steamboat Springs to offer five-day per week, in-person learning for the full 2020/21 academic year, a credit to Girodo’s steady hand.

“Our duty as a Board is to ensure that our school is best equipped, financially and operationally, to meet the needs of a growing community both now and into the future,” said Steamboat Montessori Board Chair Jessica Valand. “We want to thank Michael for his leadership and care in fostering our young school from its early days to the wonderful, thriving Montessori community that it is today. Over the coming months, we will work with Michael to ensure full operational stability at Steamboat Montessori, making a particular effort to draw upon the passion, talent, and vision of our amazing teachers and staff as we embrace the changes and opportunity to come.”

The Board also announces that Steamboat Montessori will begin its search process for the Head of School position immediately, with the intention of having the position filled before the

end of the coming spring term. Committee composition, along with job search goals, job description, deadlines for applications, requirements for applicants, selection procedures, and the time frame for appointing a new HOS, will be determined by the search committee. The search committee will be led by a selected group of Board members, faculty and staff, and parent community.

Steamboat Montessori is on the cusp of exciting change ahead as it embarks upon the addition of a Middle School class in the Fall of 2022. Valand continues, “Now six years into our school’s existence, we are at a rather exciting juncture. We have never been at a more stable financial and academic place, so the timing is fortuitous for us to begin our search for new leadership to take us into this new era. We take on this responsibility with renewed energy and committed to our purpose, of lighting up the spark of intrinsic intelligence in each and every student.”

“Like so many institutions, we find ourselves in a dramatically altered landscape that would have been hard to imagine a mere two years ago,” said Valand. “We see daily that the development of grace and courtesy in our children is essential, not optional. We recognize that the expectations held for our schools—so that future generations are ready to participate in society—are shifting under our very feet. In short, we feel that there has never been a time where public access to Montessori education was more important.”

Steamboat Montessori is chartered by the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) and has achieved its “Performance with Distinction” rating for the past three years. This Distinction rating puts Steamboat Montessori in the top 25 percent of all public schools in Colorado for Academics. The school is one of just nine CSI schools throughout Colorado earning “Performance with Distinction” for the 2020-2021 school year.

Steamboat Montessori is a unique offering compared to traditional educational settings, emphasizing student independence, problem solving and choice. The school has 161 students, serving the Yampa Valley and surrounding areas with a coveted private preschool and a K-6th grade public school.

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### **Steamboat Montessori**

#### *Our Mission:*

To inspire all children to learn and grow as responsible global citizens in a collaborative, peaceful and safe environment. We are committed to using authentic Montessori methods with integrity to develop each child’s intrinsic intelligence as they become resilient, self-directed leaders and problem solvers. As a school of choice, Steamboat Montessori is a place for students, families, and teachers to grow together as an intentional community in the pursuit of academic excellence.

#### *Our Vision:*

Steamboat Montessori creates a respectful, safe, nurturing and diverse educational community where students, staff, parents and community members collaborate to become empowered, enriched, challenged, resilient and prepared individuals collectively meeting the demands of an ever-changing society.