

**LAKE SUPERIOR ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
**EMPLOYMENT JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Title:</b> Preschool Teacher	<b>Exempt/Non-Exempt:</b> Non-Exempt
<b>Supervisor:</b> Preschool Director	<b>Employment Type:</b> 1.0 FTE
<b>Revised:</b> January 2020	<b>Hours:</b> Day Shift
<b>Hiring Wage:</b> \$14.00 - \$16.00/hr DOQ	

**Principal Function:** This job is a lead teaching and caregiving position for the Lake Superior Zoo School program, a nature based preschool at the Lake Superior Zoo. Classes are mixed-age groups of children ages 3-5 years old who attend year-round full week care between the hours of 7:30 am and 5:30 pm. Equipped with a strong background in early childhood development or a related field and the ability to inspire children to connect with nature through play and exploration, the teacher fosters positive relationships with children, parents, and staff to benefit whole-child growth. Together with the teaching team, this position is responsible for planning, implementing, and documenting learning; maintaining safety and regulation standards; and participating in nature-based activities with the children in all safe weather conditions. Teachers are organized, responsible, joyful, energetic, flexible, child-focused, safety-conscious, and enjoy being outdoors year round for the majority of the day. This position will also take responsibility for the preschool center in the absence of the Preschool Director.

**Principal Duties:**

Teaching and Curriculum:

- Facilitate developmentally appropriate nature-based preschool programming.
- Incorporate project based learning in an emergent curriculum that aligns with Minnesota's Early Learning Standards (ECIPs) and North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Guidelines.
- Plan learning opportunities based on child interests, including outdoor activities, play, art, music, dance, drama, language, math, science, technology, social/emotional, gross and fine motor.
- Help young children with self-help skills in dressing, grooming, bathroom activities, etc.
- Prepare environments and materials to support learning opportunities.
- Conduct formative assessments and maintain child portfolios.

Relationships:

- Create and sustain a welcoming, peaceful and joyful classroom family atmosphere.
- Develop children's emotional, social, and behavioral skills through connection with nature, positive guidance, conflict resolution strategies, and mindfulness approaches.
- Create a culturally responsive inclusive environment for children and their families.

Physical Environment:

- Assure children's physical and emotional safety, including following procedures in medication administration, allergy management, and authorized release.
- Maintain clean, healthy, safe outdoor and indoor environment. Ensure accurate and timely documentation of compliance logs.
- Respond to emergencies in a calm and responsible manner.
- Communicate concerns about the learning environment or children to the Preschool Director.

Families:

- Involve families in their children's educational growth, and encourage families to fully participate in the program.
- Positively communicate child progress with family members and other teaching staff.

Administration and Operations:

- Collaborate with parents, guardians, education staff, and other zoo departments.

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- Maintain compliance with all relevant governmental, company, and departmental rules and regulations.
- Lead teaching assistants and volunteers.
- Assume the responsibilities for the center in the absence of the Preschool Director.

**Qualifications:**

**Education, Experience & License Requirements:**

- Bachelor's degree in education, environmental education, or related field. Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and a valid Minnesota teaching license in Early Childhood or Pre-K preferred.
- Experience working with children younger than 8 years old in a group setting required.
- College credit hours in Early Childhood Education, child psychology, or child development preferred.
- 2 years teaching experience in a licensed child care center preferred.
- Experience in nature based programming and demonstrated interest in conservation and environmental education preferred.

**Competency and Knowledge Requirements:**

- Knowledge of basic biologic, ecologic, geologic, natural historic concepts preferred.
- Must demonstrate strong emotional intelligence, including empathy and listening skillset.
- Must demonstrate working knowledge of hazards and risk assessment as related to the environments of young children.

**Skill and Ability Requirements:**

- Must be flexible and willing to assist with a variety of teaching and administrative duties.
- Must be able to create a culturally responsive inclusive environment for children and their families.
- Must be able to communicate positively and effectively in English, orally and in writing. Communication in another language a plus.
- Must demonstrate computer literacy, including use of Microsoft Office Suite and email.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with supervisors, co-workers, volunteers and the public
- Must be able to work outdoors in all seasons and all types of weather conditions 50% or more of each day.
- Must be able to safely navigate a variety of surfaces, walk long distances, stand for extended periods of time, sit, kneel, stoop, crawl, twist, reach above head, climb stairs or ramps, and carry up to 50 lb.
- Ability to understand and follow oral and written instructions
- Ability to work safely, recognize safety hazards, and apply proper safety precautions
- Ability to work varied schedules including occasional evenings and weekends

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly exposed to outdoor weather conditions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate, but can be higher than moderate based on the number of class participants, and visitors at the zoo.

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**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms and talk and hear. The employee is required to stand and stoop, kneel, bend, crouch, crawl, and climb. The employee must occasionally lift, move, and carry up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, and the ability to adjust focus. Close vision is required for administrative tasks and childcare. Distance vision is necessary for adequate class control, and assessing safety of surroundings.