



Community Action Agency of Somerville

CAAS helps local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice

Job Title: Lead Teacher (Preschool)

Supervisor: Center Director/Education Director

Hours: 35-40 hours per week

Salary: \$25.24/hr plus \$2,000 hiring bonus and opportunities for additional bonuses

FLSA: Non-Exempt

Status: Full-Time, Union

OVERVIEW

The Community Action Agency of Somerville, known as CAAS, is changing lives for our community members who are furthest from opportunity. For over 40 years, we have been helping local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice. Our largest offering, Head Start, is a free preschool program that promotes school readiness. We offer comprehensive developmental preschool and wraparound services to ~275 low-income, culturally diverse children and their families each year in Somerville and Cambridge. Our six centers are fully open for in-person learning. Our Head Start program is integrated with our Housing Advocacy, Tenant Organizing, and Income Maximization programs to provide a full suite of anti-poverty services. We are proud to be a source of stability and support for our community.

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE

We have a highly dedicated, seasoned team and an organizational structure that allows us to support our clients holistically. The Head Start Leadership team is highly collaborative and includes leaders with expertise in family engagement, health and nutrition, disabilities, and teaching and learning. We have a generous budget for professional development and a mindset of saying "yes" to whatever will help us better serve low-income children and families of Somerville and Cambridge. The person who joins our team will interact with a supportive director, peer leaders, and a committed group of coordinators and educators with a shared mission.

ABOUT THE LEAD TEACHER ROLE

The Head Start Lead Teacher oversees and implements a safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate classroom for children 3 to 5 years old in accordance with EEC regulations and Head Start performance standards. Head Start lead and assistant teachers work as a team and in close collaboration with parents/caregivers and family and supportive services staff to ensure that children and their families are prepared for Kindergarten.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintain a classroom structure and daily schedule designed to promote children's development pursuant to the learning objectives outlined in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and via the established classroom curriculum.

- Plan and implement a developmentally-appropriate, individualized curriculum in accordance with the program-wide curriculum schedule. Ensure the workload is evenly distributed among teachers.
- Use culturally competent classroom management techniques that promote each child's self-esteem and self-help skills, using the positive discipline approach to help children resolve conflicts and manage behavior.
- Communicate regularly with appropriate Head Start staff and managers regarding each child's development and family well-being. Carefully document concerns and relevant contacts in GoEngage.
- Ensure ongoing communication with key Head Start staff regarding each child's development and family well-being. Carefully document concerns and bring them to the attention of the Education Specialist and Family Advocate. Attend Case Conferences as needed to discuss plans for children needing additional support.
- Prepare and maintain all routine documentation and other paperwork required for state licensure and under our meal program and federal grant requirements.
- Follow proper health and safety protocol to ensure the classroom environment and all daily activities strictly adhere to established health and safety protocols.
- Create and maintain a culturally responsive and welcoming environment for each family; encourage family participation in classroom routines and special events. Participate in home visits and Parent Teacher conferences and solicit input from families to set developmentally-appropriate goals for the children.
- Provide guidance to the teacher and/or assistant teacher and any classroom volunteers and/or substitute teachers, while on-site. Provide input into assistant teacher annual performance reviews by providing observations and insights to the Education Director, as appropriate.
- Ensure all information in the EEC Professional Qualifications Registry profile is current and active.
- Attend all required team meetings, advocate meetings, program meetings, and in-service training days, as schedules permit.
- Pursue ongoing professional growth and maintain compliance with state and federal professional development and qualifications requirements through relevant in-service and external training opportunities.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate has direct experience in an early childhood setting, excellent supervisory skills, and a deep passion and commitment to ensuring a high-quality educational experience for CAAS Head Start children and families.

Professional Background and Skills:

- EEC Lead Teacher qualification
- Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development or related field preferred; Associates Degree in ECE required
- Minimum 18 months experience working with young children
- Ability to continue to meet Head Start Performance Standards as well as regulations for the MA Department of Early Education and Care
- Experience in curriculum planning, and classroom management.
- Computer proficiency and the ability to learn new systems for digital record-keeping, online child assessments; and remote teaching. Knowledge of and proficiency in the Google Suite (including Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Forms, and Pages). Ability to learn and use online systems including Myheadstart, Class Dojo, Teaching

Strategies Gold, and ASQ-online.

- Strong written, oral, communication, and organizational skills
- Sensitivity to the needs of low-income and a culturally, linguistically and racially diverse population; prepared to work with children experiencing trauma and willingness to develop the knowledge, skill, and ability to successfully work with such populations.
- Ability to speak another language preferred.
- An unwavering commitment to providing an **equitable educational experience** for children and families of Cambridge and Somerville
- An obsession with **clear and timely two-way communication** and follow-through
- **A collaborative spirit** and desire to share ideas and problem-solve as part of a Leadership Team

LOCATION AND TRAVEL:

The Lead Teacher will work at one of our Head Start preschool classrooms, located in either Somerville or Cambridge, MA and must have their own method of transportation. Parking is available on a limited basis, depending on the site.

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. Note: This position requires taking daily walks, lifting up to 50 lbs, and standing/sitting/moving for a minimum of 5 hours per day. 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 occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl and talk or hear.

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. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

COMPENSATION:

CAAS offers competitive compensation for this position plus an attractive benefits package, which includes medical, dental, retirement, and other benefits; and a collaborative, committed team of colleagues. 100% tuition reimbursement for relevant coursework and degree attainment. Base salary is \$25.24/hr plus \$2,000 hiring bonus and opportunities for additional bonuses.

TO APPLY:

The review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. For best consideration, please submit a cover letter and resume to jgrogan@caasomerville.org.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be discriminated against by this program, including in employment, because of race, religion, sex, national origin, immigration status, cultural heritage, age, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.