

3-TRAILS SCHOOL  
FOUNDING DIRECTOR

3-Trails School is seeking a Founding Director for a teacher-led charter elementary school located in the Hickman Mills School District in Kansas City, Missouri.

This position requires a candidate with expertise in cognitive development and educational technology. The candidate will have the education and experience suitable for establishing a public charter school. The position will require a candidate who can participate in the teaching role of the school, as well as the management and administration of the school. The school model is based on the innovative principles of teacher-led schools, student-centered, and project-based learning. The school has three curriculum anchors which are: financial literacy, wellness and sustainability and comports with all state/federal regulations. The organizing theme of the school is the Santa Fe, Oregon and California national historic trails. This position will answer to the Board of Trustees and will oversee all faculty activities. Preference will be given to a Ph. D. candidate. The opening of 3-Trails School is planned for fall, 2020.

Candidates should send their cover letter and Curriculum Vita to: [louaustin@selket.net](mailto:louaustin@selket.net). Please indicate "Founding Director" in the subject line. All communications will be held in confidence.

Visit 3-Trails School website at: <http://threetrailspolytechnicschool.x10host.com/>

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF 3-TRAILS SCHOOL  
(From our Prospectus)

Before the school day begins, the Senior Faculty teachers are meeting for their weekly conference. In short order they review and approve the monthly financial results with their accountant, sift through resumes for a new teacher position before submitting the final round to the entire faculty for consideration, discuss and approve a joint virtual reality software grant application with Hickman Mills School District, approve a contract with the KCATA to provide free bus passes for students, parents, and school personnel, and authorize travel expenses to send the 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Jensen, to the national teacher-powered conference in Boston.

The continuous quality improvement teacher committee meets in a nearby teacher-conference room. They celebrate making their benchmark attendance outcomes then begin to discuss ideas for enhancing use of the makerspace to increase academic outcomes. They agree to try out a change to the schedule to build in a makerspace orientation for each grade. As a teacher-powered school, the group is able to implement this change right away. This quick turnaround makes it easy for them to measure their decision's effect on student outcomes which they will track using the Student Education Plan (SEP) database.

While teachers are conducting this important morning business, students gather in the open-spaced, carpeted, and brightly colored town hall to enjoy breakfast together. Some of their parents are chatting as they make their way to the media center to do some work of their own. One parent stops at the bank kiosk to withdraw some cash. Though the students mix and mingle, each class can be recognized by their grade-level uniforms with historic trails ánimo icons like Bidy Mason, Sam Shepard, or Felipe Chávez. Once chosen, the icon remains with the student throughout their school career. Upon graduation, students will proudly pass these symbols down to the incoming class in the annual Badging Ceremony, an esteemed ritual led by the students each year.

At 8 a. m., students file into their classrooms to begin the day with morning circle. With student-built mobiles slowly turning overhead and unfinished chess games laid out on tables, students enter in excited for another day of learning. Today for morning circle it is Demarcus's turn to share. He reads a poem he created during last Monday's after school program, when a local poet worked with the students. After he shares, students assemble their attache cases. These personalized carrying cases hold their current project materials. Students return to the circle, carrying cases in their laps, eager to hear today's agenda.

With an abundance of instructional staffing, Mrs. Jensen had ample time to use her students' SEPs to collaboratively plan with the 2nd grade teachers for today's agenda. She is excited to see how her data-informed plans will play out. She takes her students to the computer lab where they meet with Mr. Smith's 2nd grade class. All students eagerly murmur as Mr. Smith brings down the wall-length projector screen and dials in a Skype call to Los Angeles. Soon, the students cheer and greet a group of 2nd graders on the screen from their sister school, Bidy Mason Academy, 1,600 miles away. They are joined by a senior historian from the National Park Service who will help facilitate the session. Supported by the Tech Team, the students work in virtual breakout groups of 4. A few are calculating how long it would take to travel between the two cities in a Conestoga wagon on the California trail. Some are researching the route Bidy Mason most likely took when she walked from South Carolina to California; others use Google Earth to locate her house, grave site, and the park dedicated in her memory.

Down the hall, Ms. Brown's 5th graders file in line to begin their walk to the nearby Palestine Cemetery. Alongside 5th graders from Santa Fe Elementary, they are learning how to use LIDR surface radar from professionals at the United States Geological Survey. Soon, they will search for unmarked graves of trail travelers as part of a project with the National Park Service. Their results will be posted to the school website and digitally filed in each student's SEP. Marching behind them is a group of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders carrying video cameras. Mrs. Grady, the art teacher, is bringing them to meet some professional photographers in the community who will show them how to record the LIDR activities. Later, back in the classroom the photographers will show them how to edit their videos with the latest software technology. The videos will be posted to the school website, sent to the National Park Service, and digitally filed in each student's SEP.

Amid the traffic, the teachers in the community garden committee huddle in a teacher-conference room. They scheduled this time to discuss how to use their sustainability grant from the 3-Trails School Foundation. Ms. DeLong recommends they purchase a portable greenhouse. They weigh this option against alternatives such as purchasing special software so the students can better track garden output or sponsoring an urban vertical farming teacher education seminar. Ultimately, the decision is theirs to make - and always the decision must be in the best interest of the students.

By lunchtime, all of the students have made their way back to campus for their daily lunch routine. Each day, students can invite special guests to eat with them. Today, the 5th grade special guests are their fellow Santa Fe Elementary students. Building life skills, responsibility, self-confidence, pride, and ánimo, the students always set up the dining space and clean up afterwards. A few 2nd graders take their guests outside to eat beside the community garden. One student points out that next week they will be able to eat the tomatoes they are growing! He says they will be donating the surplus to the community.

After lunch, students read. Some read with their lunch guests, parents, teachers, mentors, and each other. Everyone finds their favorite spot in the school to lock into their books which are based on their current Lexile scores and reading goals. Students and their teachers use the SEPs to track and discuss their progress daily.

Now that daily reading time has passed, the 1st and 2nd graders hustle to the bathrooms to brush their teeth. This is because this afternoon they are focusing on one of the school's three "21st Century Trails" -Wellness - through a Dental Services Exposition. The school foundation, in collaboration with a local health organization, has brought a cohort of local dental school students and their professor to provide a mobile dental clinic. The dentists set up in one of the large meeting rooms used for town hall with

portable dental chairs, mirrors, and a tray of instruments. In the Expo, 1st and 2nd graders get a free dental check-up, a bag of dental hygiene supplies, and a \$25 voucher (funded through the foundation) to use at a local dental clinic. The students end the expo with a Q&A session which leaves the dentists so impressed that they say they cannot wait to do this again - and soon!

Other grade levels spend their afternoons in a multitude of different projects. Students check their personal electronic bank accounts. Starting with their first year at 3 Trails, students learn how to set up an account, make deposits/withdrawals, budget, and accrue interest. The whole school is trying to meet their fundraising goal to support plastic waste clean-up in the Pacific Ocean. A few students proudly make additional deposits, and some take out calculated withdrawals. Mr. Smith introduces a surprise guest, Mr. Duran, an officer from a nearby bank. He tells the class that if they meet their fundraising goal the bank will match it! Shouts of joy fill the classroom.

As the school day winds down, Ms. DeLong's 3rd graders find a good stopping point in their projects as she finishes her individual check-ins. She brings the students together to take an exit ticket on the weeks' math standards using their Chrome books. She will use their data to adjust her math instruction for tomorrow. She reminds the students not to forget that they are to bring in five different leaves for tomorrow's science project. Students close up and put away their attache cases and end the way they started, in a circle, giving shout outs and a student-led review of their learning. In the evening, 3-Trails Schools still hums with energy. Some students stay for the after school program where they enjoy a deeper dive into community activities such as tending to the garden, physical exercise, guest speakers, and the arts. They can play chess, practice their music, paint, build mobiles, and even work on a personal passion project. Destiny, a 2nd grader, is creating her own card game; Enrique, a 4th grader, writes an op-ed for the school's online newspaper. In her personal office, Ms. Lockhart, who elected to split her time between teaching and administrative duties, issues the weekly teacher reimbursements for classroom supplies before inventorying the school's computers for the outside accountant.

As an evening hub for the entire community, 3 Trails School provides multiple wraparound services in its security-zoned building until late at night. In the main office, families interested in moving to the area get advice on nearby housing options. In the school commons, a monthly neighborhood meeting is in session.

Some parents put in a load of laundry and check out the clothes closet before attending the meeting. Others attend the Adult Learning Class on budgeting, instead. Next door, teachers lead evening classes for teacher-powered certification, sponsored by the school's foundation. With the program's growing success, 3 Trails dreams of soon opening a graduate school of education through its foundation. Because many of these programs rent evening space, 3 Trails School benefits from an additional revenue source for innovation and reinvestment. All of this ensures its position as a headquarters for Hickman Mills' social and sustainable economic development for years to come.