

**TLC's
The Katherine Thomas School
AT A GLANCE**

TLC Founded: 1950
KTS Founded: 1995

Student capacity:
**Lower/Middle School
(Pre-K--8):** 108
Upper School (9--12): 100

**Number of Lower/Middle
School Faculty:** 44

www.ttlc.org



**TLC's
The Katherine Thomas School
Lower/Middle School Director**
Rockville, Maryland
Opening for school year 2011-2012

Background

Celebrating its 60th year as The Treatment and Learning Center (TLC) and the 15th year as The Katherine Thomas School (KTS), TLC and KTS improve lives and expand possibilities for individuals with special needs.

Located in a 47,000 sq. ft. two story building in the Washington, DC suburban community of Rockville MD, The Katherine Thomas School is an independent day school for students with language, learning and sensory motor disabilities and/or high functioning autism in preschool through twelfth grade. The school's total enrollment capacity is 208 students. The Lower/Middle School, grade Pre-K through 8th, has capacity for 108 students and currently has 44 faculty/staff. It is accredited by the Maryland Department of Education.

TLC- The Treatment and Learning Centers

Our Mission: *To improve lives and expand possibilities for individuals with special needs.*

Our Vision: *TLC will be a highly visible, leading-edge organization with strong collaborative and advocacy relationships, and plentiful resources that support quality programs, staff, and facilities for individuals with special needs.*

Our Role: *TLC will play several roles in furthering our vision and mission:*

We will be an advocate for the people we serve through community awareness and education.

We will endeavor to catalyze change in the community to build effective partnerships.

We will strategically invest in program innovation.

Our Values

*We value **quality** in everything we do. In evaluating quality, we measure the consumer's satisfaction with quality. Consumer satisfaction is one of our most important values.*

*We value **innovation** in all our work. We define innovation as a meaningful improvement in the way we work that will enhance consumers' satisfaction, service quality or efficiency in a positive and constructive way.*

*We value **each other**. Each one of us at TLC is an important contributor and a valued member of the organization. We respect each other as team members.*

*We value **growth**. To achieve our mission, we must increase our resources. We recognize the relationship between the numbers of individuals we serve and achieving our mission.*

*We value **professionalism**. All staff will demonstrate by their behavior that they understand what is necessary to be professional and effective.*

TLC provides access to all services and programs without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, country of origin, sexual orientation, genetic information, political affiliation or disability. **Financial aid is available to qualifying families.**

KTS offers the following services:

- Full day, multi-graded special education classes, with a low student to teacher ratio and half-day preschool
- Multi-disciplinary teams fully integrated with each classroom teacher
 - Licensed speech-language pathologist
 - Licensed occupational and physical therapist
 - Licensed social worker
- Certified special education teachers with teacher assistants
- Modified and adapted Maryland State Curriculum and DCPS Standards of Learning
- Art, music, and drama rotation for all students
- Small movement-based physical education program

- Extra-curricular activities available for all students
- Internet access in all classrooms and computer lab
- Observation rooms or windows for every classroom
- The preschool program is from 12:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M., for 4- and 5-year olds with complex and varied learning difficulties.

KTS has the following special features:

- Small group instruction is provided in classrooms with an average class size of ten students with a certified special education teacher and a teacher assistant.
- Pre-K - 8th grade students learn at their own pace in multi-grade, multi-age classrooms. High school program is graded and diploma-based with a career/technology component.
- Self-esteem and social skills are enhanced as students learn from each other.
- Reading teachers consult and model effective reading instruction for all lower/middle school staff, provide staff development and training, conduct reading assessments as required, work with individual students and small groups, and manage the school reading program.
- Learning is made exciting through the use of computer technology, and multi-media hands-on materials.
- Our curriculum is developmental and adapted.
 - Provides instruction in phonics, as well as reading/listening comprehension
 - Employs a variety of multi-sensory methods and specialized language strategies
 - Integrates the services of speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists and counselors into overall learning
- Science lab with Air Watch Weather System weather station.
- **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS)** program is integrated into the school.

The Lower/Middle School

The Director of the Lower/Middle School of the Katherine Thomas School is responsible for overall administration, hiring all staff, providing educational leadership, and establishing a climate conducive to learning. The Director of Lower/Middle School, KTS, shall support and maintain the highest professional standards consistent with the objectives and procedures of the Treatment and Learning Centers

The Katherine Thomas School Lower and Middle School Programs provide a curriculum to address the needs of students with language, learning, and sensory motor disabilities and high-functioning autism in preschool through eighth grade. The Katherine Thomas School is an independent day school. The school's mission is to enable students with these disabilities to reach their full potential through a multi-sensory, developmental, language-intensive curriculum. The school addresses the individual needs of each student to facilitate success at home, school and in the community. Financial aid is available for qualifying families.

The Katherine Thomas Preschool provides a comprehensive half-day afternoon program for 4- and 5-year olds with complex and varied learning difficulties. Early intervention is critical to developmental growth. Children can have differences in sensory regulation, motortone/planning/sequencing, and auditory/visual-spatial processing abilities and language that

can interfere with a child's ability to interact and communicate with peers and adults in their environment. Using small and large group experiences and the Developmental Individual-Difference Relationship-Based (DIR®/Floortime™) model to foster interaction skills, the team of professionals works to create an individualized program to address differences and promote development for your child.

Future Leadership and Direction of the KTS Lower/Middle School

This past summer, Dr. Patricia Ritter, Executive Director of TLC, announced that she and Christina Bernabe, Education Director, would be acting together as the Interim Lower/Middle School Director. TLC asked Dr. Richard K. Jung of Education Access Strategies to help coordinate a national search for KTS's new Director of the Lower/Middle School. The new appointee's responsibilities will begin July 2011.

A Search Committee and a set of Advisory Committees were established to guide the search and offer input from a wide set of constituencies. Information-gathering sessions were held with these Committees, the Lower/Middle School Faculty, and other key leaders of the school.

In addition, two surveys were fielded at the start of the school year. Members of the lower/Middle School Faculty completed a version of the survey. Parents with students currently in KTS's Lower/Middle School responded in another version of the survey tailored to them.

These individual interviews, larger group meetings, and surveys focused on identifying the key challenges and opportunities facing the new Lower/Middle School Director as well as the desired professional and personal characters of the new Lower/Middle School Director. The results of these information-collection activities are incorporated into the section of this Profile entitled "KTS's New Lower/Middle School Director" and will be shared in fuller detail with the candidates for this opportunity and the greater KTS community as the school year progresses.

KTS's New Lower/Middle School Director

In guiding the day-to-day activities and programs for the Lower/Middle School, the next Director will be called upon to honor the school's mission to enable students with moderate to severe learning/language/sensory disabilities and high functioning autism to reach their full educational potential and be successful in school, at home and in the community. The Lower/Middle School Director will collaborate with the High School Director to provide effective and efficient overall school operations.

One of the strengths of KTS is the multi-disciplinary teams fully integrated with each classroom (speech-language, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and social workers). This new Director will co-lead, with the High School Director, the school in its Middle States accreditation process during uncertain economic times.

Respondents to both the Staff Survey and the Parent Survey fielded in conjunction with this search emphasized that the two most important challenges facing the new Lower/Middle School Director are recruiting and retaining high caliber faculty and staff and recruiting and retaining students and families.

Respondents to both surveys also agreed that leadership skills and the ability to attract, supervise and retain staff were two of the most sought-after characteristics of the new Lower/Middle School Director.

Three parental responses in particular seem to capture the essence of the comments parents gave in response to the question “What Distinguishes KTS from Other Schools”:

- “Its recognition that each student has strengths and its focus on enhancing those strengths and using them to work on the student’s challenges.”
- “Its belief that every student at the school can and will succeed. This is greatly different than many schools’ focus on “what are the child’s problems?”
- “Teachers, therapists and other staff genuinely care about the students. Students are seen as individuals and not just as a group to “deal with”.

The new Lower/Middle School Director should be an experienced educator who understands the needs of elementary and middle school students and is knowledgeable about curriculum for these grade levels. Additionally, it is anticipated that he/she should have:

- Six years teaching, administration, and experience in a private special education school or supervision
- Experience with multi-disciplinary team environment for delivery of services to students
- Proven collaborative leadership ability and communication skills
- Understanding of language-based learning disabilities and high functioning autism
- Master’s degree in education, special education or a related field
- Special education certification desirable

Focus group discussions with the current leadership team, faculty, and parents emphasized several other qualifications for success in this position:

- Proven executive function skills for effective multi-tasking and follow through
- A person who can tack successfully between being an effective building-level principal while working as an effective partner with the current Executive Director and other TLC leaders
- A strong rapport with parents, engagement with students, and leadership/mentorship of faculty
- A view that students can and will succeed, emphasizing their strengths while working with their special learning styles and differences.
- A team player who can effectively coordinate the efforts of diagnosticians, specialists, therapists, and faculty.

Application

Materials required to complete the application process include a letter of interest, current resume, list of 5 references with contact information, and a statement of educational philosophy. Electronic transmission of materials is preferred.

Credentials will be evaluated as received. The Search Committee will review first round candidate credentials, starting in December and continuing through early 2011. Candidates are encouraged to submit their complete application files by January 30th. Semi-finalist interviews are expected to begin in February. It is anticipated that an appointment will be announced before Spring Break 2011 although position responsibilities will not begin until July, 2011. An attractive salary and benefits package will be offered.

For additional information and to apply, contact:

Richard K Jung, Ed.D.
Education Access Strategies, LLC
5111 Hampden Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814
301-654-9732
FAX 1-484-730-4676
Email: dick@accesseduc.com

TLC is an equal opportunity employer. We conduct all business without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or genetic information.