

**LAKE SUPERIOR ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
EMPLOYMENT JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b><u>Title:</u></b>	Zoo School Assistant Teacher	<b><u>Exempt/Non-Exempt:</u></b>	Non-Exempt
<b><u>Supervisor:</u></b>	Preschool Director	<b><u>Employment Type:</u></b>	Full-time/Part-time
<b><u>Wage:</u></b>	\$14-16/hr.	<b><u>Hours:</u></b>	See below

**Principal Function:**

This position is an assistant teaching and caregiving position for the Lake Superior Zoo School, a nature preschool at the Lake Superior Zoo, a non-profit, AZA-accredited zoo located on the west side of Duluth, MN. We have one classroom of 18 children ages 3-5 with three full-time Teachers and one Assistant Teacher. Equipped with growing knowledge in early childhood development or a related field and the ability to inspire children to connect with nature through play and exploration, the Assistant Teacher fosters positive relationships with children, parents, and staff to benefit whole-child growth. Together with the teaching team, this position assists in planning, implementing, and documenting learning; maintaining safety and regulation standards; and participating in nature-based activities with the children in all safe weather conditions. The Assistant Teacher should be organized, responsible, joyful, energetic, flexible, child-focused, safety-conscious, and enjoy being outdoors year-round for most of the day.

This position can be full-time (M-F, 8:30-5) or part-time (4-5 days/week, 1:30-5) and receives monthly bonus pay based on hours worked.

**Principal Duties:**

Teaching and Curriculum:

- Assist in facilitation of developmentally appropriate nature-based preschool programming.
- Assist in planning learning opportunities based on child interests, including outdoor activities, play, art, music, dance and drama, language, math, science, technology, social/emotional, gross and fine motor.
- Help young children with self-help skills in dressing, grooming, bathroom activities, etc.
- Assist in preparing environments and materials to support learning opportunities.
- Assist in conducting formative assessments and maintain child portfolios.

Relationships:

- Sustain a welcoming, peaceful, and joyful classroom family atmosphere.
- Assist in developing children's emotional, social, and behavioral skills through connection with nature, positive guidance, conflict resolution strategies, and mindfulness approaches.
- Sustain 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.
- Assist in maintaining a 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 Teachers and/or Director.

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**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.
- Maintain compliance with all relevant governmental, company, and departmental rules and regulations.

**Qualifications:**

**Education & Experience:**

- High school diploma or GED required.
- Valid CDA – **or** – 12 college credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE), Child Development (CD), Elementary Education (ELED), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSPED), – **or** – enrolled in a program that will lead to these qualifications – **or** – Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree in Education or a related field.
- Experience preferred in nature-based programming and demonstrated interest in conservation and environmental education.

**Skill and Ability Requirements:**

- 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.
- 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.
- Knowledge of basic biologic, ecologic, geologic, natural historic concepts preferred.
- 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.
- Must be able to work outdoors in all seasons and all types of weather conditions 50% or more of each shift.
- 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 lbs.

**Other:**

- Pediatric CPR/first aid certification required, or the ability to receive certification within 2 weeks of employment.
- Successful background check required.
- Must have reliable transportation.

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**BENEFITS for full-time employees**

- Health insurance (zoo pays 67% of the premium)
- Paid Holidays, Paid Time Off
- Simple IRA match up to 3%
- Employee Assistance Program
- Flex Savings Account for Childcare Costs and/or Health Care (e.g. dental, vision expenses)
- Aflac group policies for short term and long term disability insurance, hospitalization, etc.
- Free zoo membership – discounted admission to other zoos/aquariums/museums in Minnesota and across the country
- Uniform allowance
- Professional Development allowance
- Discounts on gift shop and café purchases and behind-the-scenes tours
- Four free zoo admissions for family/friends per year

**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 in all seasons. 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.

**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 safely navigate a variety of surfaces, walk long distances, regularly stand for extended periods of time, sit, and occasionally 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.

**Instructions on how to apply can be found at: <https://lszoo.org/about/employment/>**