

Dear Monarch Montessori Hiring Committee,

The past few months have brought unexpected twists, both personally and professionally. In November, after significant reflection, I accepted a new role with a nonprofit and began the transition away from Monarch. My goals were clear: to leave the school positioned for continued success and to assure the staff they would thrive in my absence. Though it was difficult to step away, I am proud of how I left—putting the needs of the school first until my final day and ensuring a confident handoff for the team.

After a brief break between roles, I was preparing for a major shift—my first job outside of education in 25 years. Just days before my intended start date, however, a federal spending freeze jeopardized the organization's funding and led to ongoing litigation. As a result, the offer was rescinded.

I reached out to Julie—not to ask for my role back, but to request a letter of recommendation and provide a heads-up about potential unemployment paperwork. During that conversation, she asked if I might consider returning. I gave it serious thought, and the answer quickly became clear: yes. In fact, with time, I've realized I may have underestimated how much Monarch still means to me, and how much I still want to contribute to its future.

So here I am—humbly applying to return to the role I held for eight years. While this is not the professional path I expected, I believe it is the right one.

Why Consider My Return?

I bring a rare combination of experience and qualifications: I am bilingual, trained in Montessori across multiple age levels, and deeply familiar with the complexities of bilingual education. I've completed AML orientation training for both upper grades (6–12 and 12–18) and have hands-on experience in Nido, Primary, and Elementary environments.

Most importantly, I've demonstrated my ability to lead effectively. During my tenure, Monarch achieved:

- A strong dual-language program that improved academic outcomes for English learners and stabilized enrollment
- A thriving Outdoor Learning Program that transformed an underutilized space into a vibrant learning environment
- Significant growth: Elementary enrollment grew by nearly 80 students, and First Steps expanded from three to five fully enrolled Children's House classrooms
- The long-awaited unification of First Steps and Elementary for Children's House, enhancing culture and kindergarten readiness

- A shared leadership model (ILT and FSLT) that amplified teacher voice and fostered sustainable leadership
- An equitable and transparent pay scale between First Steps and Elementary staff
- Monarch's first-ever Green rating—progress I believe we can regain

While I didn't accomplish these things alone, I was the leader who championed and guided them. I know I can continue to lead Monarch into its next chapter.

Addressing the Elephant in the Room

I recognize that my departure and subsequent return may raise valid concerns. I spent the end of 2024 preparing to step away, sharing candidly that I was ready for a change and feeling some fatigue. Those of you who know me understand I've always led with transparency—through my strengths and my struggles.

The question is not whether I can do this job - I can. The question is whether returning is truly the best path forward for both the school and me. Over the past couple of weeks, I've sat with that question. I've revisited the challenges and joys of leadership at Monarch, and I keep coming back to one truth: I care deeply about this school and its future.

Rebuilding trust is important to me. My approach will be grounded in transparency, swift and focused re-engagement with current challenges, and a clear commitment to our shared goals—including middle school expansion and navigating policy changes with fidelity to our mission.

Most importantly, I want to invest in our emerging leaders, helping create a culture where growth is shared, leadership is sustainable, and all of us can thrive through life's natural transitions. In many ways, Monarch has always felt like a family. I believe we can continue to grow stronger together.

In Closing

If Monarch's next leader is meant to be someone new, I will fully support that direction. I am actively applying elsewhere, and I trust that a fulfilling opportunity will emerge. There is no need to hire me out of obligation or nostalgia.

But if you believe—as I do—that I still have something meaningful to offer, and that my experience, vision, and heart for this work can guide Monarch through its next chapter, then I would be honored to return.

Warmly,
Laura Pretty

