

Program Director - Haight Ashbury Cooperative Nursery School

The Haight Ashbury Cooperative Nursery School (HACNS), a non-profit parent-run co-operative pre-school in San Francisco, is seeking to fill the position of Director. This is an amazing opportunity to take full ownership of a well-loved school and shape its evolution.

Opened in 1974, HACNS offers a magical place for children to learn and grow. Child-led play, developmentally appropriate art and science projects, books, music, and movement are all part of daily life at HACNS. Situated at the Grattan Playground Clubhouse in Cole Valley, our uncommonly large, sunny, and sandy site is an urban oasis where children can master new physical challenges with the freedom to explore and adventure.

At HACNS, a child's only job is to play. Children are encouraged to try out their ideas, exercise their imaginations and develop a sense of control over their own worlds. As a cooperative pre-school, parent participation helps create a family atmosphere reflective of the San Francisco community.

After years of incredible leadership, our current Director is retiring at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. We are seeking a full time Director to begin full time in August 2026.

The Director will supervise the overall operation of the school and its daily program, performing duties in accordance with the ethics and standards of current practice and following the HACNS Bylaws, Operations Manual and Handbook, while also playing a critical role in forming its next chapter and recruiting new families.

Job Responsibilities

- Create an inspiring, nurturing, and safe environment for nursery-aged children.
- Recruit new incoming families for the 2026-2027 school year
- Implement a stimulating, effective daily school program with a play-based curriculum in which you would serve as the sole teacher working alongside participating parents ('working parents').
- Provide guidance to children based on a pedagogical philosophy built around respectful, non-coercive care.
- Support and guide working parents in applying a pedagogical philosophy built around respectful, non-coercive care.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with children and parents.
- Set up the school environment daily, including assembling necessary materials, with help from working parents.
- Participate in monthly membership meetings, including providing a Director's Report and parent education, and attend meetings of the HACNS Board of Directors.
- Distribute an outline of the monthly curriculum plan to parents.
- Plan and attend the end-of-year Graduation.
- Participate in other special events of the school community, including fundraising events.
- Make enrollment decisions, including assessing children's readiness to attend.
- Work with parents to oversee the general administration of the school in areas including budget management, purchasing, school facilities, administrative files, communication with families and liaison with prospective families.
- Liaise with state licensing authorities to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Keep up to date on first aid and CPR certification, and any other requirements of licensing.
- Keep up to date on professional development workshops.

- Join the director groups of the San Francisco Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (SFCPPNS) and the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (CCPNNS) to keep abreast of issues.

Required qualifications and attributes

- Minimum qualifications for a Child Care Centre Director as outlined in Title 22, Division 12 regulations (see below)
- Teaching or supervisory experience, preferably in a play-based or parent cooperative environment
- Experience or knowledge of parent cooperative nursery schools (must embrace the parent cooperative model)
- A firm understanding and belief in play-based education
- Leadership ability, energy, and drive to carry on the school's mission and vision
- An enthusiasm for teaching outdoors in all weather conditions
- Ability to effectively communicate with a diverse group of children and parents and transfer knowledge to families through mentoring and education
- Strong organizational skills
- Proficiency with email and computers
- Current CPR and First Aid training and Mandated Reporter training
- Valid TB test or TB risk assessment, and compliance with California immunization and reporting requirements
- Successful completion of a criminal background check and eligibility to work in the U.S.
- Ability to move on sand and lift 50 lbs regularly (moving play equipment/picking up children)
- Knowledge and competence regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Applicants must meet all qualifications set by CA DSS Community Care Licensing for a Title 22, Division 12 Program.
- Administrative management experience (preferred)
- Education or training related to anti-bias (preferred)

Required Child Care Centre Director Qualifications (Title 22, Division 12 regulations)

Completion with passing grades of at least 15 semester units of coursework in early childhood education at an accredited or approved college or university AND at least four years of teaching experience in a licensed child care center or comparable group child care program.

OR

An associate of arts degree from an accredited or approved college or university with a major or emphasis in early childhood education or child development AND at least two years of teaching experience in a licensed child care center or comparable group child care program.

OR

A bachelor's degree from an accredited or approved college or university with a major or emphasis in early childhood education or child development AND at least one year of teaching experience in a licensed child care center or comparable group child care program.

OR

A Child Development Site Supervisor Permit or a Child Development Program Director Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Hours

Estimated hours are 35 hours per week. Schedule: Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 2:30 pm. HACNS follows the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) calendar with respect to holidays.

Compensation

\$27,000 - \$100,000. Health insurance benefits and paid holidays following the SFUSD calendar will be offered.

How to apply

Applications will be reviewed and interviews will be initiated on a rolling basis. Please send a resume, cover letter and other inquiries to the HACNS Recruitment Working Group at info@hacns.com by February 15th, 2026. Preference will be given to earlier applications. Applications should be titled: Application for HACNS Director Position.

Haight Ashbury Cooperative Nursery School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, special needs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in administration of its employment policies, educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and/or other school administered programs. [ZC: standard to include in ads, taken from our website]