



TAHOE TRUCKEE WALDORF

INTERIM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: July 2026

Tahoe-Truckee Waldorf

Truckee, California | tahoetruckeewaldorf.org



Carney
Sandoe
& ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

Tahoe Truckee Waldorf is dedicated to delivering educational programs that are guided by the need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility to develop free human beings capable of imparting meaning, purpose and direction to their lives.

OVERVIEW

Located in the beautiful Sierra Nevada range, a short distance from Lake Tahoe, Tahoe-Truckee Waldorf (TTW) is a 3 campus school serving about 125 students from age 3 months through sixth grade. The two preschool campuses are located at opposite ends of the Town of Truckee, California; and the grades are located on an incredible 40 acre piece of property abutting national forest land. Nestled within an abundance of nature, the schools are nevertheless a short 40 minute drive from the major international airport of Reno, Nevada.

The path to the current school structure has been circuitous with lots of twists and turns. So while the founding was technically 13 years ago, in many ways, TTW is a startup school with the fervor and passion among board members, faculty, students and their families typical of a startup. After a history of changes including location shifts, the school is now poised to move from infancy to adolescence. While there are plenty of steps necessary to move along that trajectory, the ultimate strength of the school is that the student experience and the student outcomes remain excellent. Grounded in progressive, experiential Waldorf pedagogy, the program develops capable learners and stellar human beings for which Waldorf is known.

The school seeks an Interim Head of School to oversee the three campuses starting July 1, 2026. They envision a two-year Interim Headship that will bring structure, consistency, and stability to set the stage for a permanent head to start in the 2027-2028 school year. The pieces are in place for a bright future for the school. They seek an experienced leader to tie those pieces together and to set the school up for long term sustainability while always being focused on the students and their personal and academic development.

CURRENT TTW STRUCTURE

- Tahoe-Truckee Waldorf is the umbrella entity that operates the school. The two preschools fall under the Little Gems of the Sierra name; the grades are under the Wild River name; but it is all one legal entity.
- There is also a separate entity called Friends of Tahoe-Truckee Waldorf (FOTTW) which was formed to purchase the 40 acre property where the grades operate.
- Little Gems operates one campus of about 50 students located literally in the Village at the base of the famous Northstar Ski area. <https://www.northstarcalifornia.com/>
- It serves local area students as well as those from farther away to the South such as Incline Village, Nevada, Kings Beach and other Lake Tahoe shoreside communities. The Tahoe-Donner Little Gems campus serves about 30 students primarily from the large Tahoe-Donner HOA community. <https://www.tahoedonner.com/community/general/about-us/> Both preschools are in rented facilities that have been well adapted to provide a warm Waldorf-based, nurturing and caring environment for their children, ages 3 months to 5 years-eleven months. While often referred to as “preschool,” there are actually three sections: infants, toddlers and preschool. The grades (TK-6) are located on the property effectively owned by TTW called Haskatasun, (from a Basque word meaning “freedom or liberty”) in Truckee.





- Each preschool campus has a campus director with the Northstar Director mentoring and supporting the Tahoe-Donner Director. Wild River (the grades campus) has had its own Director who has also been teaching. All three directors currently report to the board.
- In addition to the Directors, the school has an individual who herself experienced attending a Waldorf school serving as Admissions Manager and, as is typical of most startups, other duties as assigned. Out of financial necessity, dedicated and capable Board members have undertaken some administrative responsibilities, most notably business operations and finance; as well as marketing and communications.
- FOTTW has a separate Board overseeing and managing the Haskatasun property. TTW, the operating entity, pays rent to FOTTW. FOTTW and TTW are separate non-profit entities, each with its own board. There are some board members who serve on both boards, and the relationship between the two is a positive, familial one.

FUTURE STRUCTURE

In its desire to move from infancy to adolescence, there are two significant changes from the current structure that the Interim Head will be expected to lead:

- In order to make the three campuses feel like one school; and to increase the conversion from preschools into the grades, the Interim Head will be the Board's single employee overseeing all operations. The two preschool campus Directors will report to the Interim Head and are looking forward to more support, someone to bounce ideas with, etc.
- While dedicated Board members have rolled up their sleeves and literally saved the school in the past by jumping into administrative roles (because there was nobody else to do that work), everyone agrees that the Board should step out of operational roles and migrate to a more typical oversight and fiduciary role.

As is typical of startups, lines of responsibility can get blurred leading to a lack of clarity of who does what, to things possibly slipping through the cracks. The school seeks an efficient, smoothly-running operation.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Moving the school to a more typical, sustainable operating model is the umbrella description of the work of the Interim Head of School. In addition, one member of the school community commented, “There are a ton of moving pieces in the combined operation. We need someone who can hold all the pieces together and make things happen.” Some specific aspects include:

- Creating a true feeling of one school from 3 months through sixth grade (and eventually through 8th grade and maybe even beyond down the road). In addition to a more predictable and consistent approach across all three campuses, this should increase the pipeline flow from preschool into the grades. California has Universal TK which presents a retention challenge to be overcome, akin to that experienced in other parts of the country.
- It remains a challenge to cultivate a Waldorf trained faculty. Whether the Interim Head is Waldorf-experienced or not, building a sustainable faculty development approach that meets the challenge of finding trained Waldorf educators and attracting them to a small rural community is a top priority.
- It is important to have strong pedagogical leadership to assure that Waldorf principles are followed and adapted as necessary for the realities of the Truckee community here and now.





- Marketing and growing the school has been a challenge given its recent history of operational shifts, campus relocations and more. Whether Waldorf-trained or not, the Interim Head will be expected to put in place a marketing and outreach program that celebrates and communicates the wonderful student outcomes of Waldorf education.
- An experienced school head will be able to help the Board in its desire to transition out of operations, by setting up an administrative structure that assures clear lines of responsibility as well as high standards of success while being creative in the utilization of talent already residing within the school, as well as full or part time new administrators to join the TTW team. The Board believes that the more that “things get done correctly and in a timely manner,” the less they will have to step in to cover the gaps.
- TTW is a closely-knit community....one of its strengths. There are many people occupying multiple roles with lots of overlap. At the same time, there is a desire to have clear boundaries with clarity and separation of roles.

QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Overall, the school is looking for an experienced leader who knows what a well-run school looks like and can bring together all the disparate pieces into one cohesive whole. Specific characteristics include:



- A hands-on leader who knows how to manage, who will connect with everyone on the ground level and be involved in operations on a regular basis.
- The ability to observe, listen, assess and make decisions that are timely, followed-through and will “get things done.”
- An inspiring team leader who can support faculty and staff while also having the ability to instill a culture of clear high expectations combined with a culture of accountability for results.
- A warm, approachable, charismatic leader who can nevertheless be firm and make tough decisions when necessary.
- While prior Waldorf experience is of course desirable, it is not required as long as the leader can ensure fidelity to Waldorf values and pedagogy as well as being able to make a compelling case for the unique importance of a Waldorf education.
- The ability to inspire everyone with a common vision, high aspirations, student-outcome-centered messages. An understanding of school marketing.
- A proven leader for taking the school from infancy to adolescence while bringing a sense of calm competence, stability, reassurances and at the same time, the joy of the program of the school.
- Sufficient financial experience and acumen to assure that fiscal resources are optimally deployed.
- Sufficient development background to help the school set up a sustainable approach to fundraising.

LEARN MORE

- [School Website](#)

- [School History](#)

- [Little Gems](#)

- [Wild River](#)

- [About Truckee, California](#)



TO APPLY

Because time is of the essence, interested parties should send the following documents as soon as possible to: Skip.Kotkins@carneysandoe.com

- A current Resume
- A cover letter indicating your interest in this specific position and experience vis-a-vis the qualifications listed above
- A statement of experience with Waldorf pedagogy or progressive education in general
- A list of 5 professional references (who will not be contacted without first getting your permission)

The full-time salary range for this position is \$150,000 - \$200,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, education background, and expertise.



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