



Seeking an Executive Director

About NCSA

Nevada City School of the Arts is a tuition-free public charter school in California, providing students, families, and staff with an arts based choice for elementary education. NCSA fosters academic, artistic, and social emotional achievement, serves as a collaborator and contributor to the greater community, and is committed to safe, respectful, and equitable conditions for learning and working for everyone in our community.

NCSA is located in Nevada City in the Sierra Nevada foothills, a small, arts rich community with a strong sense of place and civic involvement.

Enrollment and grades served:

TK-8, 517 students

Staff: 108

The Position

The NCSA Board of Directors, Charter Governance Council, is seeking a highly qualified and dedicated Executive Director to lead Nevada City School of the Arts and advance its mission and vision.

The Executive Director serves as NCSA's chief executive and provides strategic, instructional, organizational, fiscal, personnel, and facilities leadership. The position is responsible for supporting academic excellence, arts integration, student well being, an inclusive and collaborative school culture, and the continued growth and success of NCSA.

The role also includes executive oversight and long term stewardship of NCSA's school owned campus and facilities, including facilities planning, deferred maintenance, capital improvements, and major projects.



The Leader We Are Looking For

NCSA is seeking an experienced educational and organizational leader who understands the unique character of an arts-integrated charter school and can provide strong leadership while preserving and strengthening the qualities that make NCSA special. The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- A strong commitment to NCSA's mission, vision, and arts-integrated educational philosophy.
- A successful record of educational and organizational leadership.
- Experience leading teachers, administrators, classified employees, and other professionals in a school setting.
- Strong instructional leadership and a commitment to academic, artistic, and social-emotional achievement.
- Strong financial management skills, including budgeting, forecasting, resource allocation, and long-term planning.
- The ability to lead a complex organization, establish priorities, delegate effectively, develop strong teams, and follow through.
- Experience overseeing complex facilities, long-term facilities planning, deferred maintenance, capital improvements, or comparable organizational assets.
- The ability to navigate difficult issues, manage competing priorities, build consensus, and lead an organization through change.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to build relationships with students, staff, families, the Board, and the broader community.
- Integrity, sound judgment, humility, curiosity, collaboration, and a commitment to continued professional growth.



Board and Governance Relationship

The Executive Director reports to the Charter Governance Council and is expected to understand and respect the distinction between Board governance and Executive Director management. The successful candidate will be comfortable operating independently within authority delegated by the Board while communicating openly and proactively and providing clear, timely information necessary for effective Board oversight. NCSA's Board operates under the Carver Model of Governance, also known as Policy Governance, in which the Board establishes organizational Ends and Executive Limitations, monitors organizational performance, and speaks with one voice, while delegating authority to the Executive Director to manage operations within those established boundaries.

Why NCSA

NCSA is sponsored by the Nevada County Board of Education. Beyond the school itself, Nevada County is a wonderful place to call home – year-round outdoor and community activities, and a vibrant, deeply rooted arts and cultural scene.

- Lead a school with more than 30 years of history. NCSA was founded in 1994 on a vision of putting arts and music at the heart of education, a vision that continues to define the school today.
- Build on a strong foundation while helping shape what comes next. NCSA has grown from a small building into a thriving TK-8 school with strong, consistent enrollment and waitlists in every grade.
- Steward a truly unique, school-owned campus at Bitney Springs. NCSA's campus includes multiple buildings and extensive grounds. Years of investment have improved the property, while its size and character create exciting possibilities for its future.
- Support Nourish NCSA, the school's food program that provides free breakfast and lunch to every student, sources fresh produce from local growers, and connects kids to what they're eating through initiatives like Harvest of the Month.
- Lead a dedicated and creative staff. Work alongside passionate educators, artists, and professionals while fostering a culture of collaboration, trust, and shared purpose.
- Join a community that knows how to rally around its school. NCSA's history reflects significant involvement from families, educators, artists, donors, and community partners, from creating the school itself to renovating its theater and ultimately securing a permanent home.

- Have the opportunity to think big. With an established school, a unique campus, a strong identity, and decades of history, the next Executive Director can focus not only on today's needs, but also on long-term vision, sustainability, facilities, programming, and organizational growth.
- Become a steward of something the community has spent decades building. The next Executive Director has an opportunity to carry that legacy forward while helping define what NCSA becomes next.

Desired Experience and Qualifications

Candidates must hold a valid Clear California School Administrator Credential and a Master's Degree or higher.

NCSA also seeks candidates who bring:

- Teaching experience
- Significant experience with curriculum, instruction, assessment, personnel management, school finance, strategic planning, and organizational leadership
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with students, families, employees, Board members, and community members from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

A complete Executive Director job description, with the full scope of responsibilities, experience, and qualifications, is available upon request.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit:

- Completed application
- Letter describing their interest in and qualifications for the Executive Director position
- Current resume
- References/letters of recommendation

Submit Applications To: EdJoin

Selection Process: The Search Committee will review applicants using the qualifications and criteria established for the search, conduct interviews, and recommend finalists to the Board. The final selection of the Executive Director and approval of compensation rests with the NCSA Board of Directors.

Compensation and Contract

Starting Salary Range: \$125,000 to \$166,611

A Brief History of Nevada City School of the Arts

Nevada City School of the Arts began in August 1994, founded by a group of dedicated parents and educators with a vision for a school where arts and music were an essential part of a child's education. The school originally served grades 4–8 and operated under the Nevada City School District. Classes were held in a small building at the top of Broad Street in Nevada City, with academics taught in the mornings and arts electives offered every afternoon.

In August 1995, NCSA moved into the Eigen Building, and the following summer the school's sponsorship changed from Nevada City School District to Twin Ridges Elementary School District. The school continued to grow, adding 3rd grade in 1996 and expanding its arts programming. Students participated in visual and performing arts electives, with performance nights held at the Miner's Foundry and later at the Don Baggett Theater at Nevada Union High School. Art exhibitions and receptions also became part of the school tradition.

By the 1998–99 school year, the arts program was continuing to evolve. Foundation Art was introduced for younger grades, arts electives expanded for older students, and in February 1999 NCSA moved to the Bitney Springs campus, the place that would eventually become its permanent home.

Growth continued quickly. First and second grades were added in 1999–2000, followed by kindergarten in 2000–01. Handwork and movement were incorporated into the lower grades, while Artist-in-Residence positions expanded, allowing more artists and teachers to share their expertise with students. This collaborative approach helped establish the rich arts curriculum that remains central to NCSA today.

For many years, NCSA shared the Bitney Springs property with Yuba River Charter School, with NCSA primarily occupying the lower campus and YRCS using the upper campus. When Yuba River Charter School eventually moved to its own property, NCSA was able to expand. Middle school moved onto the upper campus.

One of the most significant projects during this period was the renovation of the campus theater. With support from Cal Solar, NCSA families, and community donors, the previously dilapidated building was transformed into an important space for performances and gatherings. Little by little, NCSA was putting down roots at Bitney Springs.

After approximately 16 years of renting, everything changed in 2016, when the Bitney Springs property was put up for sale. The school explored other possibilities, but after years of investing in the campus and building a community there, leaving was difficult to imagine. NCSA ultimately purchased the property for \$1 million, with the seller generously donating the remaining \$4 million in property value. We were now the owners of 350 acres and 15 buildings.

Owning the campus opened an entirely new chapter for NCSA—and brought a new level of responsibility. Over the following years, we sold some of the land and a home that was a part of the property, using the funds to significantly invest in improving and rehabilitating the property and its many buildings. Projects included improvements to Building 9 and the commercial kitchen, electrical and power upgrades, solar installation, ADA improvements, new accessible parking and stairs, the Ravenwolf parking area, the LC playground and UC courtyard improvements, bike trails, and ongoing work throughout the buildings and grounds.

In 2019, NCSA launched a scratch-cooked lunch program through the National School Lunch Program. What began with lunch has since grown to include both breakfast and lunch, and today we serve more than 450 students while sourcing ingredients from over 20 local farms and producers.

In 2024, NCSA partnered with the Nisenan Tribe to create the Kocim Pakan Restoration Project, an ongoing effort to restore the health of the land while honoring its cultural history and the Nisenan people's deep connection to it. Through ecological restoration, education, and the revitalization of traditional Indigenous land-management practices, the project strengthens the relationship between the Nisenan community, NCSA, and the land we share.

What began in 1994 as a small school in a small building on Broad Street has grown into a thriving TK–8 school serving more than 500 students in Nevada County. Through every move, expansion, renovation, and challenge, the original vision has remained at the heart of NCSA: creating a school where arts, music, creativity, academics, and community belong together. More than 30 years later, that vision continues to shape the NCSA experience and the community that has grown around it.

