

DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS SEARCH

CURTIS SCHOOL

Los Angeles, California
curtisschool.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

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Mission

To develop, in every child, a sound mind in a sound body, governed by a compassionate heart.

Vision

By pioneering programs that inspire engaged, healthy, and empathetic young learners to embrace the next phases of their education and lives with joy, confidence, and purpose, Curtis School sets the standard for elementary education in the Greater Los Angeles area and beyond.

At a Glance



Established
1925



Enrollment
495



Total faculty
59



Student-faculty ratio
4:1



Students of color
53%



Financial aid awarded
\$2.5M



Faculty with advanced degrees
49%



Campus size
27 acres

Lower Elementary enrollment: 229

Upper Elementary enrollment: 266

Faculty of color: 51%

Students receiving aid: 14%

Endowment: \$42M

Annual operating budget: \$22.6M



Overview

Curtis School is a place that believes in the joy of childhood. Founded in 1925 and serving students from developmental kindergarten through Grade 6, the school is grounded in a deep respect for how children grow intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. Set on a beautiful 27 acre campus overlooking Los Angeles, Curtis is an oasis where students have room to roam. Small classes, close faculty-student connections, and an intentional focus on child development allow students to be known well and supported with care and purpose. The school's mission to develop a sound mind in a sound body, governed by a compassionate heart shapes daily life in classrooms, on the playing fields, and across the community.

Curtis School is seeking a Director of Admissions to follow the impressive 30-year career of Mimi Petrie, who is shifting to a part-time role in a new area of the school for her. In her replacement Curtis aspires to build upon the solid foundation that she created. Demand for enrollment at Curtis is enviably high, and the new Director will enjoy a strong reputation in Los Angeles, along with supportive families and a robust financial assistance budget.

Intentionality permeates every aspect of Curtis School, including the people it hires. A recently designed "Portrait of a Curtis Employee" identifies five key actions that distinguish their adults. A Curtis employee centers students, collaborates, learns and grows, shows compassion and empathy, and embraces diversity. These guideposts help create a professional community culture that is both joyful and purposeful.

About the Head of School

A visionary and transformative Head of School, Dr. Meera Ratnesar is in her 11th year of leadership. Dr. Ratnesar is the first woman and the first person of color to lead the 100-year-old school. Bringing more than 20 years of experience as a teacher and administrator in independent schools, Dr. Ratnesar's leadership places Curtis at the leading edge of elementary education. In her first 10 years as head of school, Curtis has expanded academic and enrichment programs, advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, secured approval of the school's 30-year Master Plan, and spearheaded meaningful innovation including realization of the Collaborative Learning and Innovation Center. Dr. Ratnesar's deep commitment to fostering an inclusive and forward-thinking learning environment is the engine behind the creation and implementation of a comprehensive elementary anti-bias curriculum at Curtis.



Opportunities and Challenges

In their next Director of Admissions, the school seeks an accomplished enrollment professional who is as comfortable in front of a family as they are with a strategic plan. Building on Curtis' signature warmth and commitment to understanding and honoring childhood, the next director will have the opportunity to not only be a key face of the school but also to expand the reach of the school and leverage their ample resources in support of a robust student body.

Key Priorities:

Modernize processes while retaining a high-touch experience for applicant families. Utilizing data and technology to inform outreach, selection, and communication throughout the applicant experience, there is significant opportunity to both enhance the communications between applicant families and the school while also glean new insights into the motivations and aspirations of these families.

Expand and deepen awareness of Curtis School throughout the communities of Los Angeles. Given a robust financial assistance program, identify under-represented areas in Los Angeles and build outreach and communication strategies to introduce Curtis as an option to these families.

Build long-term strategic plans to evaluate school size, admission staffing levels, and financial assistance requirements. Given the healthy enrollment situation at Curtis, the next Director will have the ability to take a long-view towards the appropriate size of each grade, the staffing levels needed to compose the ideal Curtis student body, and the best use and goals for the financial assistance program.

Examination and evaluation of touchpoints to assess how well traditional events and communications are showcasing all that is special about Curtis. Evaluate success and impact of current programming with an eye to designing an admission program that highlights Curtis School's mission and values.

Coordinate across the professional community at Curtis and through the parent and alumni community to effectively involve these adults in the storytelling and outreach of the school. Provide accurate, rich talking points and training to ensure that the Curtis messaging is powerful and consistent.



Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The ideal candidate will be a highly seasoned and proven enrollment leader with deep experience in all aspects of enrollment, marketing, and admission. Curtis School strives to hire people committed to the school's mission and values. The following qualifications are sought in the ideal candidate:

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred.
- Minimum 5-7 years of admission/enrollment management leadership experience and a strong understanding of the budget drivers that impact school finances.
- Warm, kind, and caring personal qualities, and professional presence.
- Sense of humor combined with gravitas – able to be both approachable and commanding of respect.
- Commitment to working in and fostering an inclusive community and demonstrated high EQ in working with team members, campus partners, prospective families and alumni.
- Strategic thinker and creative problem-solver with ability to see the big picture.
- Superior communication skills, both written and spoken.
- Experience with early childhood education and assessment models.
- Outstanding interpersonal, organizational, leadership and managerial skills.
- Skilled and facile with enrollment management technologies that support all aspects of enrollment management outreach, recruitment, selection, and research.
- Strong experience with data dashboards, board presentations, and data analytics.
- Ability to manage multiple complex tasks, meet tight deadlines and shifting demands.
- A commitment to confidentiality and good judgment on sensitive matters.
- Skilled manager who enjoys identifying and developing talent and has consistently created high-functioning teams and a welcoming atmosphere within the department.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Curtis School.

[School Website](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)

[School History](#)

[About Los Angeles, California](#)



To Apply

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position
- A current résumé
- List of five professional references with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission)

Charlotte Brownlee

Consultant

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Cathy Shelburne

Consultant and Executive Coach

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