

ALL SCHOOL DIRECTOR SEARCH

SUMMERFIELD WALDORF SCHOOL AND FARM

Santa Rosa, California
summerfieldwaldorf.org

Start Date: July 2026



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES

CARNEYSANDOE.COM

Mission Statement

Based on a developmental understanding of the learning process and a view of the child that takes human spirituality seriously, Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm offers students a comprehensive learning environment designed to challenge and support them in strengthening their cognitive, emotional and intentional abilities. We strive to support the growth of social awareness and active tolerance and give students the experiential background they need to meet new challenges in a creative and responsible manner.

Overview

Someone once quipped “If you’ve seen one Waldorf school...you’ve seen one Waldorf school.” Even in this educational segment where schools come in all shapes and sizes, Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm in beautiful Sonoma County California stands out as truly unique. Consider:

- The school sits on 38 acres of land-trust property abutting a nature preserve and acres of California vineyards.
- On that campus is a farm with animals, greenhouses, an apple orchard and a curriculum integrated into the overall program of the school. Want to learn how to milk a cow? ask a Summerfield third grader.
- The school serves students from 18 months through 18 years. They have the rarity of a Waldorf High School, located on the same campus as the rest of the school and farm, but with its own dedicated buildings. The school has 74 children in early childhood, 140 in the “grades” through 8th grade; and 55 in the high school.
- Walking to the farm portion of the acreage, you pass by a genuine circus tent where students can learn “circus arts.” Of course, Summerfield offers all the more usual Waldorf enrichment activities such as handwork, Eurythmy, woodworking, choir and instrumental music, fine arts, and much more.
- Summerfield graduates are highly sought by colleges because of their academic prowess and their remarkable strength of character.

Leading this complex school is the All School Director, a title that is synonymous with “Head.” The current All School Director is concluding a planned three-year tenure and looks forward to her retirement. The school seeks a new All School Director to begin July of 2026 or possibly July 2027 to build on the foundation of more than 50 years of success, but with an eye solidly set on the future.



Strengths of the School

Among many strengths of the school the new All School Director will find:

- An unequivocal commitment to the values, underlying philosophy and pedagogy of Waldorf Education.
- A school with dual accreditation from AWSNA and WASC.
- A faculty, some of whom have been at Summerfield for decades, who feel that the school community is their “home” and about whom one student said simply, “They really know and care about me.”
- Pride in their Bio-Dynamic® certified Farm.
- A campus that embodies Waldorf calmness, values and is ideally suited to Waldorf education.
- An evolving administrative structure reflecting Summerfield’s change three years ago from classic Waldorf governance to a more typical “single leader reporting to the board” structure. Dedicated, hardworking administrators and staff who care deeply about the work of the school, and equally deeply about each other.
- A bright and educated parent body, many of whom share their talents with growing parental volunteer work in support of the school.
- A wise and supportive Board that many describe as “the best we’ve ever had.”
- The bucolic beauty of Sonoma County, one of the most desirable places to live.
- While Summerfield does not run it, there is a Waldorf training program housed on their campus.



Challenges and Opportunities

As unique as Summerfield is, their challenges and opportunities will be familiar to many experienced school leaders, including:

- There is a need to build enrollment. The quadruple-whammy of the Pandemic, an area decline of about a third in school-aged children, recent opening of four Waldorf Charter schools in the area (including a high school), and the devastating fires that hit California wine country, have resulted in significant enrollment declines.
- Accordingly, the budget needs to be right sized, even as there is a necessity to significantly expand marketing and outreach. Marketing and communications continue to be areas needing attention. The school has recently outsourced some of these functions with mixed results.
- There is a sense that more intentional efforts can increase the retention of 8th graders into the High School.
- As with many schools, it remains a challenge to attract and retain quality, trained faculty members.
- Both the pedagogical and administrative parts of the school could benefit from a thoughtful revisioning of the ideal leadership structure. There are excellent people, but it is a challenge for the All School Director to oversee both parts of the school AND be the external face of the school.
- Willing and talented parents are an untapped resource. Parent education and parent engagement at appropriate levels, could benefit the school.



Desirable Skills and Personal Attributes

- Demonstrated experience overseeing a complex school.
- A charismatic relational leader whose own joy and positive attitude set a “tone at the top” for a joyful, collegial, cohesive school community.
- Both visionary leader and effective manager. Able to captivate and inspire both internal and external audiences with the magic of Waldorf education, while effectively motivating, delegating and holding subordinates accountable.
- An inclusive decision-maker seeking input and collaboration whenever possible, but still able to make timely and sometimes tough-but-necessary decisions.
- A leader with a spiritual core who understands that Waldorf is not just academics and enrichment programming.
- An accessible, relational leader who is visible in the daily life of the school.
- A marketer who understands storytelling, branding and messaging, and is eager to be the compelling and inspiring face of the school.
- Familiarity and comfort with fundraising and developing a culture of philanthropy and donor stewardship.
- Sufficient financial acumen to partner with the business office and the board to make sound financial decisions and craft a budget that supports the priorities of the school.
- Familiarity with all age/grade ranges from EC through high school is highly desirable but not essential.
- If not Waldorf-trained, a familiarity with experiential, progressive education and a willingness to undertake Waldorf training.

Learn More

Click on the links below to learn more about Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm.

[School Website](#)

[High School Profile](#)

[School History](#)

[About Santa Rosa, California](#)

[Waldorf Pedagogy](#)



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;
- A statement of experience and/or familiarity with progressive education, ideally Waldorf;
- A list of five professional references, including current supervisor, with name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

Skip Kotkins

Senior Consultant

skip.kotkins@carneysandoe.com

The full-time salary range for this position is \$140,000-\$200,000. The starting salary is based upon, but not limited to, several factors which include years of experience, education background, and expertise.