

Vista Grande High School Job Announcement

School Director / Principal

Vista Grande High School is seeking a dynamic, committed school director to continue developing a new high performing charter high school. The successful candidate will use the Expeditionary Learning design as the framework to cultivate high academic achievement, a reflective and outcome based professional atmosphere, and intentionally build a culturally diverse community based on respect, compassion, leadership and citizenship.

Expeditionary Learning (www.elschools.org) is a whole school reform design that emphasizes engaging cross-disciplinary learning expeditions and instructional practices that promote equity, high expectations of work and character, and field and service work. The school will provide the academic preparation and requisite support for all students to be ready for the post secondary path of their choice.

Vista Grande High School (www.vghs.org) is a free and public charter high school in Taos, New Mexico. VGHS was chartered by the Taos School District in January 2006 and opened its doors for the first time in the Fall of 2007, enrolling students in grades 9-10. In 2008-2009 the school grew as we accepted incoming freshmen, thus spanning to three grades. In the 2009-10 school year we will continue to accept incoming freshmen while our 11th grade progresses to be the first graduating class of VGHS in 2010.

Job Responsibilities:

Implementation of Expeditionary Learning Design

Assume responsibility for developing full implementation of the Expeditionary Learning design among staff (*EL Core Practices and Benchmarks: 1) learning expeditions, 2) active pedagogy, 3) culture and character, 4) leadership and school improvement and 5) structures*) in a high performing new small charter high school and implementing the schools mission, goals and objectives of the approved charter.

- A. Reinforce and institutionalize the implementation of Expeditionary Learning practices through regular observation, coaching, evaluation and collaboration.
- B. Foster explicit connections between physical adventure and challenge and academic challenge.
- C. Actively participate in wilderness adventures (hiking, overnight backpacking trips, etc.) and other adventures that are part of our curriculum and school calendar.

Professional Culture and Community

Work collaboratively with staff and Instructional Guide(s) to develop a cohesive professional community with common vision focused on furthering the mission of the VGHS charter and using a multitude of tools to develop and deliver effective curriculum and create a positive school culture.

- A. Model and facilitate effective instructional practices in collaborative work time, staff meetings, communication, professional development sessions and team meetings.
- B. Create a professional community that focuses on using data to drive curriculum and instruction as the primary vehicles for improving student achievement and school culture.
- C. Model and facilitate commitment to on-going professional development by participating fully in Expeditionary Learning's on-site work and off-site conferences, institutes, summits, regional programming and Outward Bound courses.
- D. Facilitate teachers continued professional development in content knowledge and instructional repertoire, and provide the resources needed.
- E. Recruit, direct hiring, train, and evaluate all staff.

School Culture and Community

Work collaboratively with all stakeholders - staff, students, families, VGHS Governing Council, local organizations and the Taos Municipal School District to intentionally craft a cohesive culturally diverse community based on respect, compassion, self reflection and team work.

- A. Ensure a safe, supportive and productive environment for students, staff, and families.
- B. Demonstrate cultural competencies in managing a multi-cultural institution.
- C. Cultivate strong partnerships with community organizations and regional and national partners.
- D. Oversee student recruitment.

- E. Intentionally build a school culture that evidences high expectations for courtesy, respect, compassion and a scholarly environment for both students and adults.
- F. Demonstrate the ability to communicate the vision to school boards, staff, parents, students, and community members through the use of symbols, ceremonies, stories, and other activities.

Manage Finances and Location

Work collaboratively and effectively with the VGHS Financial office, VGHS Governing Council, TMS School District, and Public Education Department to in the matters of finance/budget and school site/location.

- A. Align the uses of time, money, and materials to the school's instructional priorities.
- B. Assist in preparing the school's annual budget for approval by the Governing Council and the Public Education Department.
- C. Present the school budget to the Governing Council, school community, parents and charter school authorizer.
- D. Manage the budget in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulations.
- E. Work towards establishing a permanent campus for VGHS.

Day-to-Day Operations

Manage the everyday operations of staff, students and the overall facility.

- A. Ensure that staff duties are completed to a high level of excellence according to timelines or dead lines.
- B. Foster an environment that addresses student misbehavior and academic challenges in a positive, solution-based manner.
- C. Make certain that facility operations (upkeep, maintenance, repairs) are completed on a regular basis.
- D. Clearly communicate and implement policies and procedures.

Salary:

- Minimum salary will align with the NM high school principal salary schedule as approved by the state legislature and the Public Education Department. Salary starting at \$80,000.

Qualifications:

- A. Possession of or ability to obtain the required New Mexico Level III – B Administrative license.
- B. Masters degree and three years teaching experience preferred.
- C. Experience implementing Expeditionary Learning or similar experiential learning model preferred.
- D. Evidence of training and practitioner experience in project based or expeditionary learning and reading and writing across the curriculum preferred.
- E. Demonstrated successful school leadership experience and experience supervising and evaluating staff.
- F. Communication and interpersonal skills to provide clear leadership within a highly collaborative school environment and multi-cultural community.
- G. Proven experience as an instructional leader and staff manager.
- H. Experience managing schedules and budget to reflect a school vision
- I. Ability to form productive relationships with students, families, staff, governing council and authorizer.
- J. Demonstrates the ability to use and promote technology and information systems to enrich school curriculum and instructions and monitor instructional practices.
- K. Bilingual Spanish/English preferred.

How to Apply: Applications are due by May 26, 2009. Screening will be conducted week of May 26 and interviews will be conducted by the end of May in Taos, NM. Finalist must successfully complete a background check.

Please submit the following.

- Resume
- Three professional letters of recommendation.
- Letter of interest defining the strengths you bring to the position.
- A statement defining your educational philosophy and how it informs your administrative practices.
- Submit narrative responses to the following:
 1. From your perspective, what do you feel is the role of a school director / principal in relation to a schools student body, staff, family, the community at large, the charter authorizing school district and the schools governing council?
 2. Provide a description of the training and/or experience that would help you lead a high school that is based on an Expeditionary Learning Model.
 3. Provide a description of your experience as an instructional leader and staff manager.
 4. Provide a description of your experience crafting and managing a school budget.

Submit application materials to:

Edwin Fernandez, VGHS Governing Council President
Vista Grande High School
P.O. Box 700
Peñasco, NM 87553-0700
vghs4@msn.com
Phone 575.587.0264

Application must be emailed and hard copy mailed to the above address.